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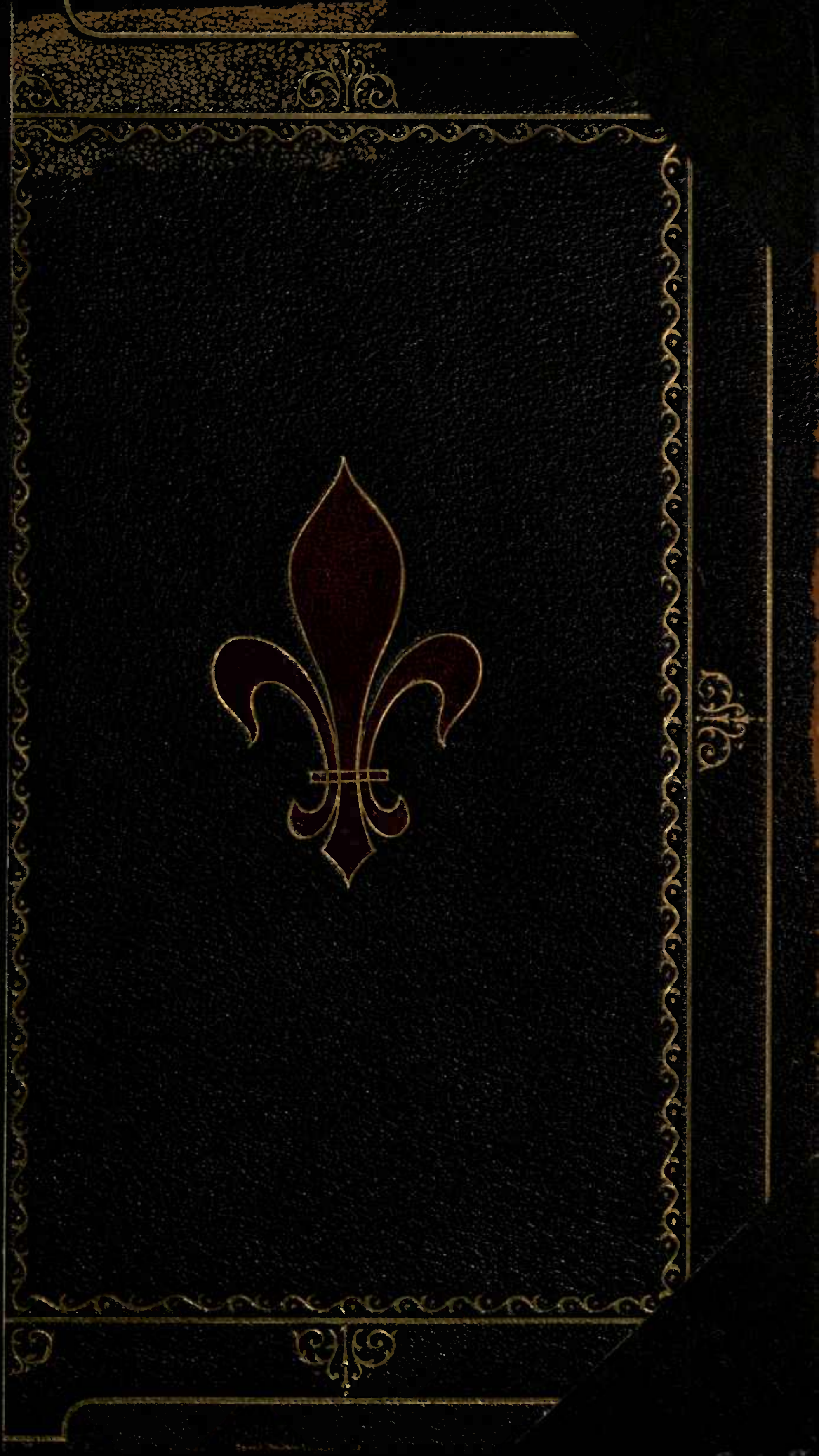

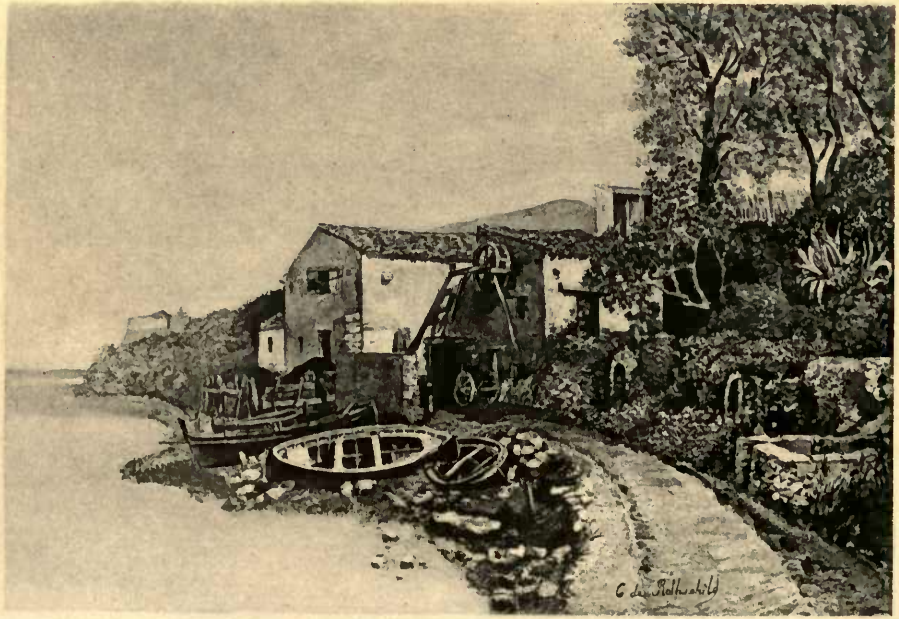
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Courtiers and Favourites of Royalty

ILLUSTRATED

The Memoirs and Correspondence of Madame D'Épinay

In Three Volumes
Volume Three

Paris
SOCIETE DES BIBLIOPHILES
London and New York
MERRILL AND BAKER

ON THE LAKE NEAR GENEVA

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OF
MADAME D'ÉPINAY

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MEMOIRS AND CORRESPONDENCE

OF

MADAME D'ÉPINAY

CHAPTER XVI (*continued*).

From M. Grimm *to* Madame d'Épinay.

I hasten to thank you for your letters, my dear friend; they have given me sincere pleasure. I should have liked to shed a torrent of tears while I read them, but I am so unhappy that neither sorrow nor joy can make me weep. Your poor friend, always surrounded by onlookers, cannot abandon himself to his feelings; he is in a state of perpetual constraint; you know how that suits me. You can guess how weary I feel, and attribute to that alone the feeble expression of my gratitude and affection. I did not need to be separated from you to feel that my heart is united to yours by the strongest and most indissoluble ties; but I feel more than ever that you could replace everything for me, if I were allowed to live as I please.

You are delighted at the favour I enjoy; ah! do you not see how far it removes me from you? It will need all my cleverness to secure all the advantages offered to me. If I did not flatter myself that I should succeed, I should not speak so calmly to you about it. I admire destiny and that upon which a man's position and fortune depend. What have I done to deserve mine? What will not many people do without being able to secure the like? They would be happy if they could do so; and yet I am not.

My dear friend, I wait for your letters with an impatience which you can never conceive. I am uneasy about your health; I do not know why, but I cannot convince myself that it is good. The milk diet should be commenced with the utmost precaution. I should like to reply to all your questions at once; I do not know with which to begin. Amuse yourself without injuring your health, and then I shall enjoy all your pleasures. It is impossible for me to talk to you as I should like, my dear friend; we are in too great confusion.

The courier is just starting; I must make haste to close my parcel. If I do not have a letter to-morrow, I shall be greatly to be pitied. My regards, etc.

From M. GRIMM *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

My dear friend, you tell me nothing new about Diderot; I guessed that he would hinder the negotiations about La Chevrette; although he said nothing definite to me, I presumed that it was bound to be so. You see, my dear friend, how difficult it is to destroy prejudices; however, it may come to pass, if you can take upon yourself to do nothing in the matter. Leave things alone; time manages everything. If that honest head, which possesses such beautiful eyes, no longer worries about cleansing itself from offences of which it is innocent, it will insensibly confound its enemies.

Nothing that the Baron d'Holbach has told you ought to make any alteration in your mode of life, or in the manner in which you treat each of those of whom he has spoken to you. What can they say? It seems to me that you ought to hold the following opinion in regard to these matters: Duclos is a rascal, therefore you turned him out; Desmahis is a madman, you need not try to cure him; Margency may chatter, but what does it matter to me? What can he say? The more intimate he becomes with you, he is bound to think better of you; he is a very agreeable companion; you should be on neither better nor worse terms with him. I advise you always to answer the Baron very lightly in regard to this, and to cut short the thread of his chatter; he is very fond of talking, and that only makes mischief. Whatever reason you may have for wishing Diderot to think well of you, if he does not, so much the worse for him; you will do admirably without him, and you will be none the worse for it. Seek your resources in yourself, my dear friend; and who ever had more than you? Every look that you direct towards yourself ought to beautify your existence and to make it precious to you. By treating your friends with uprightness and confidence, you will gather round you agreeable and honourable society, and you will derive from friendship the only advantage that one has a right to expect from it.

I cannot, by-the-way, refrain from advising you to act with the greatest caution in regard to Rousseau. I have for a long time thought his behaviour towards you not quite straightforward. He does not venture to speak ill of you, but he allows others to speak disparagingly of you in his presence, and he makes no attempt to defend you. I don't like that.

So my dear friend has always had an idea that I mistrusted her ? What a suspicion ! You know very little of me if you think that I am a man to adopt the impressions of others when I am able to see and judge for myself. Confess that you are unjust, my friend, and believe that, if I often do not say what occupies my attention, it is not want of confidence that keeps me silent, but the fact that I am not fond of arguments or useless reflections. There is often not a word of truth in the conjectures which hope or fear makes us form ; and besides, why should we flatter ourselves with expectations or alarm ourselves prematurely ? For instance, I have more than one idea in my head for settling down near you ; but my views depend upon so many "ifs" and "buts," that I could not say anything rational to you. We must leave it to time to bring about each circumstance, and, when the time comes, I will speak. Trust to me ; you know whether you are dear to me or not; destiny may vex us greatly, but it only rests with you to make me always happy.

M. de Croismare's son has had the measles; he will remain at Cambrai until he has quite recovered. Tell the Marquis that M. de S*** has handed the money, which he intrusted to his care, to his brother. Also inform him of my feelings towards him; they ought to be known to him.

It is execrable weather here; nothing but rain. Everything is under water. I am told that it is the usual weather in this country. I did not need this additional circumstance to make me dislike it.

Adieu! my dear and incomparable friend, I carry your image in my heart. May you be as happy as I desire! You do not know how dear you are to me, since you have suspicions of my confidence in you. Adieu! I beg you will give my respects to Madame your mother, and embrace the dear children for me, if Mademoiselle Pauline's dignity is not offended.

I bless the Comtesse for having stopped the visit to Chantilly.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

Yesterday, when I was going to begin to write to my dear friend, I received a visit from the Comtesse d'Houdetot. She seemed gayer and wilder than ever; she wearied me, for I am not at all in that frame of mind. She told me I might expect to see her here on a few days' visit with Madame Blainville. I shall do all I can to avoid her, if possible without offending her, for her sister-in-law's kindness is heavy and unendurable. The Comtesse wishes to make the acquaintance of the Baron d'Holbach and his wife. I will have nothing to do with it. The Baroness, who knows her slightly, does not like her at all. On the other hand, if the Baron speaks to me about her, I will beg him not to be influenced in this respect by any wish to oblige me, or any feeling of regard for me; and, while praising her disposition and character, I will say nothing about the unsuitability of this connection.

Mademoiselle le Vasseur has just been to see me. She tells me that, a few days ago, Rousseau had a fearful quarrel with M. Deleyre, and nearly turned him out of the house. His temper grows more unmanageable every day; she declares that, since his last visit here, he spends his days and nights in tears; she and her mother cannot understand the reason. He talks to himself during the night. He cried out the other day: "Poor Madame d'Épinay, if you only knew!" No one knows what he means. He says that he is coming to stay a fortnight here, that he has a number of things to confide to me, and that he has always found himself benefited by my advice. But it seems to me incredible, although Mademoiselle le Vasseur assures me that it is true, that the Comtesse d'Houdetot visits the hermit nearly every day, and that they have been forbidden to tell me. She leaves her servants in the forest, and comes and returns alone. Little Le Vasseur is jealous. I myself think that either she is lying or that they have all lost their heads.

The Baron came to dine and spend the day here; it was wretched weather, and we did not leave the fireside. He is to come back to spend Easter here with his wife, and I think that that is all I shall see of them; they have already told me that they can hardly leave Paris. I am lucky not to need them, my friend; you see what use they are to me! As for the Marquis de Croismare, he is in love with Mademoiselle la Grive, who sold him some maps cheap last week; she and her collection of commonplace trifles will prevent him from coming for some time.

Oh, my friend! how fastidious you have made me! I feel it every day. I used to be very fond of M. Margency's society, when I saw him from time to time in Paris—but, from morning till night, and *tête-à-tête!* I do not believe that anyone in the world but you would be able to endure such a trial. My companion's indolence is positively enervating to see; he is never in the same mind for fifteen minutes together. If I try to talk, I do not find a single idea in his head; at other times I discover a crowd of them, but all so mean, so utterly insignificant, that they are lost in the air before they reach the ear. He sticks like grim death to the opinion of the moment, and then, to one's utter astonishment, gives it up a quarter of an hour afterwards without being asked to do so. He begins thirty different things at once, and never keeps up one; he is always delighted with what he is going to do, and tired of what he is doing; the most sublime piece of writing only inspires him with scorn, if it unfortunately contains any expression that offends his ear. I am sure that he would not forgive the handsomest woman in the world if her hair were badly dressed. He also has an aversion for everything that smacks of the provinces. He is not wanting in penetration or cleverness, but I have never found him grasp a vigorously conceived idea, or one out of the common. I wanted to tell you all this; I like him very much, but I would rather be alone, or have some companion who would unite and amalgamate his fancies with mine, which are many. Really, without this reflection, I should perhaps already have taken a dislike to him.

I thank you for your explanation of your attitude of reserve, which I confess had worried me somewhat. I throw myself at your feet and do justice to your sublime prudence. What you say on this subject has made me laugh. It is so true and so exactly like you that it is impossible not to yield. Yes, my friend, it is not to-day for the first time that I feel that I can trust myself to your guidance without misgiving; you inspire me more and more every day with that kind of security which is enjoyed by a child asleep on its mother's lap.

Yesterday, I began to take milk in the evening; it agrees with me admirably, and I have never felt so well in my life. Do not be in the least uneasy about me; all my privations and my care for my health have become my chief pleasure next to that of writing to you; but, whereas the latter is only momentary, the former is continual. In other respects, I am neither cheerful nor sad, but a trifle absent-minded and rather melancholy. Such a state has its charm, and I find it hard to forgive those who attempt to get me out of it. The picture of your life which you have drawn is always present to my mind. It is certainly I who have reason to think myself unhappy! I am able to abandon myself to my melancholy and dejection, while you, who are always subjected to annoyance, have scarcely time to write. You only wanted this punishment, I this privation! I am going to try and find some pleasant and useful occupation for myself.

I read to Pauline the paragraph in your letter in which you mention her and her brother, and ask permission to embrace her. She looked at mamma and said: "I think we may let him." "Yes," said my mother, laughing, "but only until he comes back." "All right," answered Pauline, "and then we shall see."

From M. GRIMM *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

*The Camp at ****

After three days' march we have halted here before continuing our journey to ***, where we shall arrive on the 30th. I am waiting to hear from you, my dear friend, and I am well. That is all that I can tell you in my present state of confusion, surrounded as I am by people who take no interest either in you or me, and who have something else to think about. Write to me as often as you can; I trust in you. As I had foreseen, I shall have to go through the whole campaign, without being of any service and without being with myself. I had written a letter to the Comtesse of C*** on this subject when I left Paris; she showed it to the Duc d'Orléans, and wrote me a reply, in accordance with the answer he gave, which drew from me tears of gratitude.

We are advancing, and the enemy does not retire; but, in spite of that, I can hardly believe that a battle will take place. There is great talk of peace, and I catch at the news with avidity. Be so kind as to send me the gazettes regularly. Believe me, my dear friend, however eagerly I desire to talk to you, it is quite impossible in the midst of fifteen people who are making a fearful racket. However, I will write to you as often as I can. When you do not hear from me, do not be uneasy, but be sure that it has been impossible for me to write.

You overwhelm me by writing so regularly; continue to do so, my dear friend, I beg of you; your letters are my only consolation. I congratulate you upon enjoying as you do the beauties of nature. Oh, you were born under a lucky star! I implore you, do not miss your vocation; it only rests with yourself to be the happiest and most adorable creature upon earth, provided that you do not put the opinion of others before your own, and know how to find satisfaction in yourself alone.

I am delighted to hear about your health. Oh! if you could only continue well while I am far from you, I think I could almost console myself for our expedition into this accursed country. We lead a tolerably hard and very magnificent life. We have left the heavy baggage at ***; but, in spite of that, on every march it takes three hours for the train of our indispensable necessaries to pass. This is scandalous, and I am more than ever persuaded that the world is made up of abuses which a man must be mad to attempt to remedy. I envy you your good fortune in being able to plan schemes of work; I wish I were in the same position; but we live three in a room, sometimes more. I dare not speak to you of my tortures any more. Adieu! my dear friend. I have already begged you, and beg you again, not to wait for my letters. I am in excellent health, and nothing, good or bad, can happen to me except through you.

You do not tell me how your mother is: I assume that she is well. Give my respects to her. I have so much to say to you and so little time that I must defer it to another occasion. I am writing a few lines to M. de Margency.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

I knew that M. de Jully had for a long time been endeavouring to obtain some post in the department of foreign affairs; but, having failed to obtain what he wanted, and apparently having some reasons for avoiding Paris, which nobody can guess, he has decided to accept the Residency at Geneva. He came yesterday to tell us. My mother and myself in vain exhausted all our efforts in representing to him that his resolution was exceedingly odd; that he was going to expatriate himself and make himself miserable for life, by leaving and deserting a family to which he might be indispensable, as he would be to my children, to us, to the Comtesse d'Houdetot. It was no use; he has made up his mind to expatriate himself for a few years: so he declared to us with the obstinacy with which Heaven has endowed him. He agrees with all our arguments, and none the less adheres to his resolution.

"But, my dear brother," I said to him, "if you only intend to leave Paris for a few years, why do you not travel without binding yourself to an inferior post?" He replied, like the Comtesse de Pimbêche: "My dear sister, I want to be bound." We cannot make it out at all. What appears to me even more singular is his choice of Geneva, for he is devout even to meanness.

In short, he is going to leave within two months; but I am afraid he is taking a foolish step. Do you know what I foresee? He will set out; he will reside at Geneva, since he has made up his mind to do so; he will be bored to death; then he will return to Paris, where he will play a very insipid part after this freak, and in this manner he will lose the respect which his honourable character and mediocrity had gained for him. It is said that it is the Marquise de Pompadour who has put this folly into his head; what is certain is, that she openly plays the part of his patroness, and that he praises her to excess.

The Comtesse d'Houdetot is deeply grieved at her brother's folly; we all look at it in the same light. But she is still more grieved at the fact that the detachment in which the Marquis de Saint-Lambert is serving is going to Westphalia.

As for myself, having exhausted my grief, I feel inclined to take men as they are, and to amuse myself at their expense. I will begin with you, my friend. Tell me, for instance, what you mean to do with the gazettes? This request appears to me altogether fantastic. Do you want to learn what you did three weeks before? or do you wish to read the future in them? As I know nothing about them, I will send them to you that you may inform me what one ought to see in them.

CHAPTER XVII (1757).

From M. Grimm *to* Madame d'Épinay.

Munster.

I have received no letters to-day, and have returned to the frightful solitude in which my soul will always be plunged when I no longer hear of you. Sadness, uneasiness, impatience, and weariness are my companions in this desert, and will not leave me until the moment when I shall be able to rejoin you. Oh, my dear friend, I only live for you; my heart is closed to every other feeling but this, which absorbs it entirely. To help me to endure my absence from you, I seek in vain for the firmness and energy of which I was sometimes capable; I can no longer find them. You pity me, and I need it greatly; you are very generous, far more so than I believed. From the outset you appreciated my situation, and felt how painful it was for me. Your letters are full of tenderness and compassion, and my heart is touched by them.

How kind you are to continue in good health! But it seems to me that you are in a great hurry to take the milk in the evening. Do not be precipitate, I beg of you; it is one of your old faults —always to go too fast. My dear friend, Nature acts slowly and imperceptibly; she has given you beautiful eyes; make use of them, and act, I beg you, as she does.

What you tell me about Rousseau seems to me very extraordinary, and the Comtesse d'Houdetot's mysterious visits still more so. As for him, he is a poor devil who torments himself, and does not dare to confess to himself the real source of his troubles, which is to be found in his own confounded head and his pride. He creates for himself imaginary reasons, in order to have the pleasure of complaining of the whole human race. I trust to your prudence in dealing with the tiresome repetitions which you will doubtless hear; distrust your good heart, and take care of your happiness and tranquillity. I do not doubt that I count for something in all that, but it would be an insult to you to recommend my interests to you; wherefore, my dear friend, I only speak to you of yourself.

I am astonished that everybody is perpetually making mischief with Diderot. I have been his intimate friend for five years, and he is the man I love best in the world. During all that time I have not heard anything talked about. The reason is, that to make mischief it requires two people, and all these chatterers do nothing but abuse his frankness and his good faith.

Yesterday I was interrupted by the arrival of the Marquis de Saint-Lambert. I spent the evening with him. You may guess that we said something about you, but you cannot imagine my satisfaction at seeing a man who had just left you. It is a great consolation to me that he will be my companion during the rest of the campaign. He has spoken to me of Rousseau's injustice towards me. He thinks that you have long since turned his head, and that I have become his bugbear. Is this true?

Why, then, is the Comtesse d'Houdetot so cheerful? Has not Saint-Lambert's departure caused her any pain?

Yes, my friend, you are quite right to do without anyone's assistance; that is the way to gain the lasting attachment of all the honest people round you, not to mention that, whether alone or surrounded by others, you will always be well. You are right; the society of the Comtesse d'Houdetot does not suit the Baron and his wife at all. I hope that this fancy will pass off like many others of his we have known.

Your portrait of Margency is a masterpiece; nothing could be truer, more refined or more delicate. There are certain figures that only show up well in a group; the Syndic is one of them.

I have just received two of your letters. I begin to fear that you will overtire yourself if you write so often. I ask you as a favour, my dear friend, to consider your health before everything else, and not to write volumes to me; that heats the blood, and makes me tremble for the milk, of which you do not say a word in your last letter. I take that as a good sign. I am quite well; except that, what do you want me to tell you of myself? Up to the present I have been of no service to M. le Maréchal. I do not know whether I ever shall be, but I have my doubts. There are twenty-eight of us secretaries; and what the deuce can be done with philosophy and metaphysics in the army? After this experience I hope that the Prince will feel that I must settle near him and you.

Do you know that what you tell me of M. de Jully is a flash of light for me, and explains a rumour which I had heard, but which was so absurd that I could not believe it. It may, however, have been true; but if I guess correctly, he will be rewarded according to results, and as he cannot be such as people would have him, he is a ruined man.

I do not know whether what I am writing to you has common sense. I am lodged in a cursed garret, in the midst of the royal kitchen officials, who are preparing dinner for us.

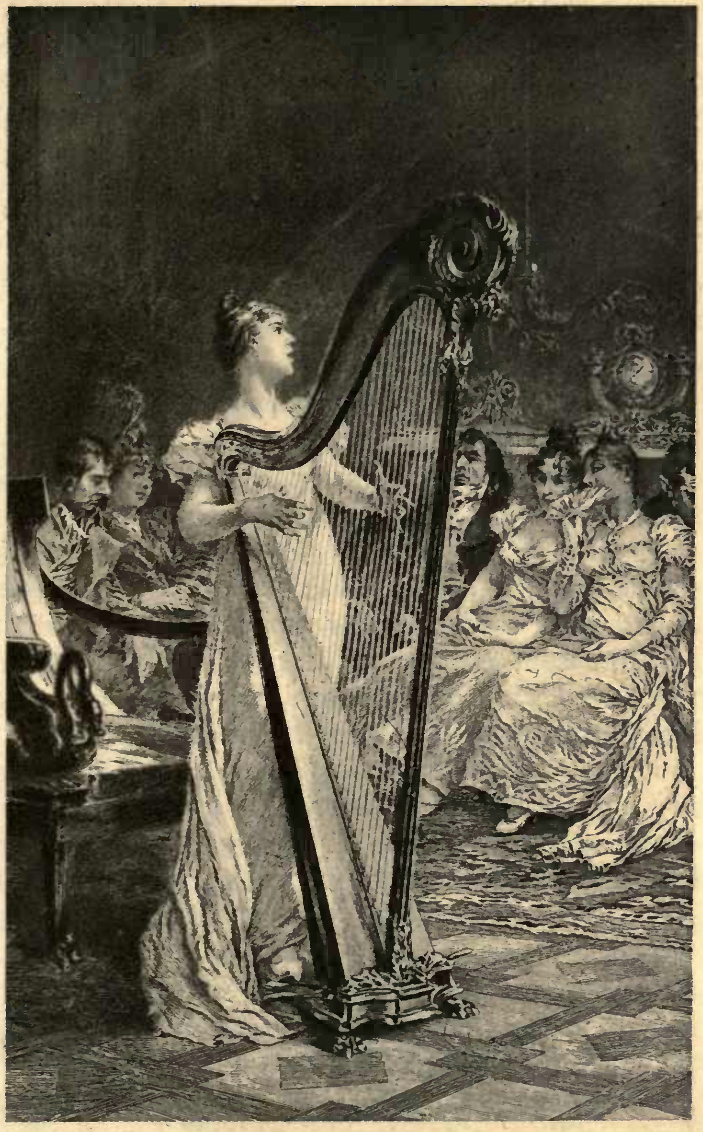
Believe that my heart is attached to you by the most delightful ties. I speak to you continually, but I cannot write to you; read therefore what I say to you, not what I write to you. Adieu! take care of my dear friend. I intrust her to your care with all my heart; say to her from me all that is gentle and affectionate; you will never say enough; tell her above all not to grieve herself, and to meet with hope all the evils which overwhelm us. Tell me of your affairs, of your mother, of your children, of everything that interests you.

M. Grimm had made a correct guess about M. de Jully's Residency. He was charged with a secret mission, and it had been required of him that he should pretend to desire this post in preference to all others. His mission, it was whispered, was to observe the proceedings of the King of Sardinia, and to watch what took place in Piedmont; but the uneasiness exhibited in regard to this was a mere chimera, and I am persuaded that it never existed.

During M. de Jully's stay at Geneva, he never remained there for a month at a time; he was nearly always in Switzerland, excusing himself on the ground of the curiosity with which this country inspired him; he even, on more than one occasion, went as far as Neufchâtel. A very great lady of the court, convinced that the King of Prussia would not be able to resist all the powers which were turning against him, had fixed her ambition upon becoming sovereign of Neufchâtel. She was desirous of prejudicing people's minds in her favour; but, being uncertain of the issue, she only attempted indirect negotiations, such as could not compromise her. This plan was the height of folly; no one but M. de Jully would have lent himself to it. But Madame * * * discovered the secret of making it seem to him likely to succeed. As it was important to choose an honest, trustworthy man, without ambition, not important enough to give offence or to attempt to play a part without being obliged, they turned their eyes to M. de Jully, and promised to with-

MUSIC AT D'EPINAYS

FROM THE PAINTING BY KAMMERER



draw him from the post immediately after the war, and to bestow upon him the recompense he demanded. He fell into the snare, and was very lucky to get out of it without personal injury. Few people know the story.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

My dear friend, since you wish me never to leave off telling you about our domestic life, you must know that every morning we assemble as usual in the little room below, where we breakfast—my mother, the children, Linant, and myself. Soon afterwards, Linant and my son withdraw, to walk or to study. If, however, the conversation is worth their listening to it or taking part in it themselves, they remain. The lazy Margency sometimes comes down, as well as those who are a fixture with him; but all do as they please in this matter except my children, whose duty I consider it to show this mark of respect to my mother, and to whom I am pleased to set the example. About ten o'clock everyone retires, to fill up his time in the manner he fancies. I am glad to have done with household affairs as soon as possible, and next with my toilet, which is soon made. I write to you, I work, and do not reappear in the dining-room until dinner-time. After this we play for a good hour with the children, who retire at five o'clock; then we comment at random upon what they have said and done, what they will say, do, or think, and Margency laughs at us The other day he put the conversation between my mother and myself into verse; it was delightful nonsense. Sometimes, very frequently, we talk of you, and that is the time when we all find ourselves agreed. What else can I tell you? We walk, read, and sleep. Altogether our life is somewhat monotonous, but it is calm and peaceful; anyone who looks at it closely will see that it is just that happy life which so many people seek in vain.

I have had a conversation with my daughter's governess, the subject of which was as follows, or nearly so. I have thought about it since, and I confess that I need your assistance to guide me. I was complaining that my daughter frequently assumed an air of conceit and self-importance which displeased me. Mademoiselle Durand told me that she was very proud of the notice taken of her by my friends, and of the lengthy and sensible conversations which they hold with her. "She is accustomed to play a part," she added; "she is puffed up by it. I am afraid, Madame, that this is one of the inevitable disadvantages of the plan of education which we have adopted." She is right; I agree with her.

We thereupon discussed the means of remedying this. There would be the greatest danger in making her submit to any public humiliation on our part; she is so determined, that we can only restrain her by appealing to her sense of shame; if we blunt this feeling, we shall have no check at all upon her. We agreed, first, to give her to understand privately that she is only taken more notice of than an ordinary child because she has shown a desire to be sensible; but that such notice will necessarily cease if she ceases to behave properly, and becomes vain of the favour shown to her. I am certain that the word "favour" will disgust her, and I am not sorry for it. Next, I will give my friends a hint to laugh at her directly she gives herself airs of pride or importance. That seems to me the most sensible way to destroy only the excess of her pride; but who can promise me that, on the day she receives this lesson, some intruder will not arrive whom it will not be convenient for us to warn, and who will spoil all our efforts?

Our habit of putting no check upon her in her reading or occupations also tends to make her flighty; it will be useful to begin to put an end to this. With this object, we have thought of reading together during the evening. At the end of two days she will ask for another book; we will tell her that she is at liberty to go and read in her own room. You see all the answer that need be made to her, and this same pride which we wish to check will make her remain. It will be the same in regard to the work.

Nothing more clearly proves the abuse of the methods of education which are not guided by the character of the child than the result, in the case of my son, of the plan adopted for my daughter. As they are both being brought up under my eyes, he cannot help sharing the conversation and the notice which is taken of his sister, otherwise it would be an exhibition of unjust and injurious favouritism. Now, far from being made conceited, this wearies and makes him uncomfortable, and he is far more at ease with those who treat him familiarly than with those who want to enter into conversation with him. It is true that he is less intelligent than his sister, and his mind is proportionately less formed.

Rousseau hardly comes to see me at all; he is always at the Comtesse d'Houdetot's; he has only dined here once during the Baron's stay.

The Comtesse has just arrived. She spoke to us of a tragedy, which has been a complete success; the subject is a Greek one and very interesting; "but," said she, "these Greeks think and speak like Frenchmen; the verses are perfectly beautiful, and exactly in the style of Racine." The Syndic, when he heard this, jumped for joy. This is all your poor friend, who has retired from the world, has to tell you; she only knows what she is told, and would not listen to anything were it not for her desire to amuse you.

The following day.

My husband has dropped from the clouds this morning; I do not know where he has come from, but his chaise was covered with mud, and all to pieces, and he and his servants seemed utterly exhausted. He came up to my rooms. I reproached him for leaving us in such a state of embarrassment. He put out his hand to me with tears in his eyes: "Do not overwhelm me, my dear friend," he said; "I am unhappy enough already."

Convinced that I had to dread some fearful accident, I felt so overcome that I hardly ventured to question him. However, finding that he did not utter a word, and continued to shed tears, I said: "Speak, then; I am prepared for anything. I have long since foreseen——" "Do not alarm yourself," he interrupted; "my trouble only concerns myself."

Would you believe that I was foolish enough not to feel calmer? "It must be very serious," said I; "may I share it?" "Alas! you can do nothing." "Perhaps some good advice—it is sometimes important to take counsel. You know that you can count upon me." "I know it; I know your good heart. I have always found——" "Well, do you need any prompt assistance; of course, you want money?" "No, my God! no . . . that is to say, pardon me, I have not got any; but it is not that. Come, I can speak to you; you have not a heart like another; you are an affectionate mother." "Oh, heaven! what? Tell me, then." "A person whom I love and esteem has a little daughter—at death's door, there is no hope for her."

You can guess how I felt on hearing this nice secret. I remained motionless, and so indignant that at first it was impossible for me to utter a word. While I was silent he continued speaking with warmth and emotion: "If you only knew the child—her charms, her talents!"

I ended by pitying him. "Poor man," I said to him, "you are bewitched! I know no remedy or consolation for one in your condition." I got up to leave him, but he did not seem to be offended at my remark, or at the little sympathy I showed. He got up, and, wiping his eyes, followed me; then he suddenly said: "By-the-way, I expect three friends to come and shoot with me; one must amuse oneself a little; tell them to get some breakfast ready for us." It occurred to me that there was not a word of truth in all that he had said, and that he had only been acting, in order to prevent me reproaching him as he knew he deserved. But, as he was leaving to shoot, he asked me to open the letters which might be brought for him, so as to prepare him, on his return, for what I might have to tell him. I made no answer. The courier, in fact, arrived, and I did not open the letter, as you may imagine. I gave it to him on his return. "Why, then, did you not open it?" he asked. "Because I never interfere in matters which do not concern me." "I told you to." "That is true, but I had made up my mind to do nothing of the kind." "Then only your first impulses are honourable."

With these words, he opened his letter and read it. "Ah! what happiness!" he cried, "there has been a crisis, she is saved!" Then he turned his back upon me, called his servants, went to the stable, mounted his horse, and rode off.

M. de Jully came this evening to read us the most tedious sermon that I have ever heard in my life; it is by some Abbé, whom my neighbour has told him to patronise. He is making a collection of writings of this kind, in order to fortify himself against the Calvinism with which the city he is going to live in is tainted. This piece of eloquence found favour in the eyes of the Syndic. Three or four well-turned little phrases delighted and converted him. "It is no use," he said; "sooner or later one must come back to that; there are certain truths to which everything must yield." I do not know how long this will last; but I know well that a woman who loves that man ought to be afraid even of a blind man singing the *Vexilla regis* in the street.

I told M. de Jully of my interview with his brother; he undertook to speak to him, and make him repay the money he has advanced to me during his absence. Good night! to-morrow, or the next day, I will tell you more about it.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

To resume where I left off:

I have not answered that part of your letter, in which you informed me that the Marquis de Saint-Lambert declared that Rousseau was in love with me. I protest that he has never thought of such a thing. Where, then, did he get that idea? I have well considered it, and I am sure that there is nothing in it.

Excuse me, the Comtesse is really miserable at the absence of the Marquis; but has sorrow ever prevented her from being cheerful? She weeps with all the sincerity in the world, and laughs in the same manner. She is the most happily-constituted woman that I know.

I have not written to you for three days, because I have had visitors, and next, because—because I have just commenced writing a work, the beginning of which I rather like; it is Rousseau's romance that has given me the idea of it. All his letters are so beautiful, so well written, that the reading of it seems dull and fatiguing. When I have finished a few sheets, I will send them to you, and you can tell me whether I shall go on with it. I have also written some society sketches which have been fairly successful. M. Diderot asked my son's tutor to ask me for them; but he must do me a little more justice before he is entitled to read my musings.

M. d'Épinay, in the midst of his disorder, and in spite of the straitened resources of his household, is able to find money for this scandalous association of which you have seen the beginning. M. Francueil, the Chevalier de M***, and the little De Maurepaire belong to it. They have had a theatre erected, in which they perform operas and comedies before the court and the town. The show is only moderate; but the absurdity of the actors is interesting in a country where the whole enjoyment of society consists in laughing at it; and so people flock there, as they would to a fire.

M. Francueil came to see me once with his three partners. I received them as their conduct deserves.

It is declared that Rousseau and the Comtesse continue their mysterious meetings in the forest. Three days ago he sent me a message by the gardener, that he did not come to see me, because he was unwell. The same evening I sent to the Comtesse's house; he was installed there *tête-à-tête*, and remained two days. This seems to me so odd and comical, that I fancy I am dreaming. He spent the day here yesterday; he seemed embarrassed, but I pretended to know nothing, and to notice nothing. He still declares that he will come and spend several days with me; he can do as he pleases.

My friend, I must tell you in confidence that I am a little anxious about my mother. If I had been perfectly easy about her condition, I should not have been so long before mentioning it to you. Her health is good, but she is subject to fancies and changeable tastes, which frighten me; she thinks of nothing but the arrangements of her new house; for I must tell you that she took a dislike to the one she was living in before, and has left it. She said yesterday that she intended to ask you for your likeness, bad as it is, to put in her private room. I ventured to tell her that I should dispute possession of it, and she replied that she would not give it up to anyone but myself. Will you refuse to give it me now? Ah! my friend, you are so honourable, that you silence even the scruples of devotion.

As for my children, I am satisfied with them; they would be my happiness if I were entirely mistress of their future and my own; but, as I am not, the more reason I have to be satisfied with the promise they show, the more anxious I feel when I think of the future.

I will not write any more to you to-day, my friend; I am going to keep myself calm. I shall go for a walk, return to take my milk, and then occupy myself with my work, which seems to amuse me. What vexes me is, that I have no amanuensis, but I shall ask the Baron d'Holbach to lend me one of his copyists, so that I may be able to send you my work by instalments.

Rousseau arrived this morning with Mademoiselle le Vasseur, to stay two days here, that is, until Friday. I will give you an account of his visit if it is worth the trouble. Desmahis has written to M. de Margency, to ask him to negotiate with me for the return of a letter which he wrote to me in verse last year, and to try and persuade me to obliterate my reply from my collection, without a single compliment or polite message for me. I gave the one to M. de Margency, and obliterated the other in his presence, at the same time telling him that I did not know why he imagined that negotiations were necessary; that last winter I had made a similar request to him, but had not considered it of sufficient importance to mix a third person up in it. I further told him that the letters which I had written to him were only in my collection in spite of myself, and because he had demanded it; that I did not consider them worthy of having a place amongst all that was there, and that he was rendering me a real service in desiring that they should be obliterated.

Desmahis' letter is very involved; I am very dissatisfied with it, and I have not concealed my opinion from the Syndic, for, if the ground of the request is simple, the way in which it is expressed is just the reverse. In all this I catch a glimpse of some petty secrets of weakness combined with iniquity, which, far from seeking to unravel, I thank God I know nothing about. There are only too many people whom I disesteem in the world; I do not wish to increase their number. Contempt makes me very uncomfortable, but pity is not so embarrassing; now, I have as yet only reached the latter stage with Desmahis, and I hope that I shall remain there. In any case, I wish to banish all petty annoyance from my heart and thoughts, in order to devote myself wholly to you and to myself.

I do not understand the profundity of your political arguments in regard to M. de Jully's post; meanwhile, I hold to the opinion that I have already expressed; he intends to start almost immediately.

Yesterday and to-day I spent two hours alone with Rousseau: his conversation was limited to trivialities. The reserve which I am obliged to maintain with him embarrasses me. What you have said to me about him has made me examine him more closely; I do not know whether it is prejudice, or whether my eyes are opened, but—the man is not sincere; when he opens his mouth to make some remark which I cannot conceal from myself is untrue, a kind of chill spreads over me, which I cannot well explain, but which cuts short my words so decidedly, that I would rather be killed than be obliged to say two words to him. There is certainly some strange reason for his behaviour with which I am unacquainted, which gives him in my eyes the appearance of being false, while perhaps he is not; if he were, and I were certain of it, I should be seized with indignation, and should feel more at my ease. I do not know whether I should be wronging him if I were to say that he feels more pleasure in supporting whimsical theories than pain at the alarm which sophisms, defended with such cleverness, may inspire in the hearts of those who listen to him. I felt this myself yesterday; he has really left a feeling of utter distress in my heart. I was talking to him and M. de Margency about the way in which Linant went to work with my son; we partly appproved and partly blamed his system. Suddenly it came into my head to say: "It is a very difficult thing to bring up a child." "I believe it, Madame," replied Rousseau; "the reason is, that parents are not formed by nature for bringing up, nor children for being brought up."

This remark of his astounded me. "What do you mean by that?" I said. Margency burst out laughing, and added what I had not ventured to add: "Have you not some scheme of education in your head?" "It is true," replied Rousseau with the same coolness, "but it would be much better if they were able to do without it, and I myself had not to give it them. In a state of nature, there are only necessities to be provided for, and that under pain of dying of hunger; enemies to be warded off, under pain of being killed by them. The education of a savage needs no one's interference. The basis of our education is not natural; it must be founded upon the conventionalities of society, which, for the most part, are all whimsical, contradictory, incompatible sometimes with the likings and character of the child, sometimes with the views, interests and position of the father; and what more do I know?"

"But," said I, "we are not savages; we must be educated, well or badly; how are we to set about it?" "It is very difficult," he rejoined. "I was aware of it," I replied. "That is the first thing I told you, and I am no more advanced than before." "To facilitate your task," said Rousseau, "it would be necessary to remodel society altogether, for, as it is constituted now, you will be liable at any moment, while desiring your child's progress, to prescribe for him a lot of wise maxims which will retard rather than assist his progress. Consider honestly all those who have risen in the world. Do you believe that they have done so by conforming to the scrupulous principles of honesty which their fathers have taught them? We do not venture to tell them that they must be liars, false and distrustful; but we know very well that it is necessary for them; that is what puts difficulties in the way of education. We are sensible from experience of the advantage of these qualities. Listen to a child who is a little more intelligent than others; if he presses his father concerning the rigorous observance of the rules which he lays down for him in certain very important cases—as when it is a question of sacrificing his fortune to a friend, or assisting the unfortunate—you will find that this father brings forward so many 'ifs' and 'buts,' and introduces so many modifications of his precepts, that the child is at a loss what to decide, and the fine principles are reduced to nothing. In short, we must not expect to derive any advantage from education, unless private interest is so united to the general interest, that it is almost impossible to be vicious without being punished, or virtuous without being rewarded, a state of things which, unhappily, exists nowhere in the world."

"What! not even in your own country?" said Margency. "It is not perhaps quite so bad there as elsewhere," replied Rousseau; "but, speaking generally, wherever the education of a people is bad, that of individuals cannot be good, and the whole of one's youth is spent in learning things which have to be forgotten at a more advanced age. The great art of your education is to establish, or to forget principles according to circumstances."

"But," I said to him, "do you not think that there is some advantage in being good, even in a corrupt society?" "Yes," he replied; "but it is an advantage which we can only appreciate at the end of life." "Ah! Monsieur," I said, feeling really angry, "you forget that I am a mother, and you drive me to despair with your philosophy!" "Madame," he rejoined, with the same coolness, "you asked me for the truth; your grief is a proof that I have told it you."

What do you think of that, my friend? I confess to you that I feel deeply affected by this conversation; I need your advice to settle my hopes and fears; I cannot get used to the idea that it is necessary to abandon honesty in order to be happy in this world.

By-the-way, there has been a violent quarrel between the Comtesse d'Houdetot and the Syndic! a violent quarrel between the former and Madame de Verdelin! Thank God! I have not, and do not wish to have anything to do with it. I will tell you all about it after dinner. Good-bye, *au revoir!*

The following day.

I am very angry with you; really, my friend, you grieve me deeply. I cannot stomach the letter you have written to Madame la Duchesse's treasurer, which is all over Paris; I have heard of it from two different sources. He was wrong to circulate it; but what put it into your head to address condolences to a man of whose discretion you know nothing? Really, that is not like you, who are the most prudent and cautious person in the world, and the avowed enemy of every kind of declamation. I am astonished.

I can conceive that it is a frightful sight for a friend of humanity to see a hundred thousand men exposed to all the sufferings, misery, and cruelty inseparable from war, especially in an army led and commanded by more than one will; but you told me plainly some time ago that we must be content to lament the follies of men, and that anyone who thinks of correcting them must needs be even still more foolish. In short, my friend, if it is not for your own sake that you keep silence, do so for the sake of the tranquillity of your friends and the mortification of your enemies.

Here, again, is a letter from you in which I find nothing but soldiers, officers, generals, and commissariat officers. If I see one of these words again, I shall have a lower opinion of your wisdom.

But I must tell you that nothing pleased me more than the description of your ball and the portrait of the little hunchbacked woman who enchanted all your fine gentlemen. What pleased me most in all that was, that you have had a quarter of an hour's amusement. I promised you a story in my turn; here it is, to conclude my letter:

Madame Verdelin and the Comtesse had conceived a passion for each other, because, when they first met, they both wore a rose-coloured ribbon, and, on the occasion of the third visit, they went for a walk alone in the little forest of Margency. One sighed, the other sighed in answer, and from sighs they came to general reflections upon the inconvenience of husbands and the inconstancy of lovers; involuntary tears rolled down their cheeks so copiously that they were swollen into rivers. A side glance brought their souls together, and intimacy was established. They confess their passions; confess, do I say? they boast of them. Little De Verdelin consoles her friend by her eloquent sympathy; the Comtesse, in her turn, revives her lost hope, promises her suppers for four, walks, etc.; in fact, they leave the wood, thinking the heavens open to them. The next day my companion is informed by letter of all these new and wonderful schemes; he is recommended to go without delay to pay his respects to the Comtesse; his opinion is that there is no hurry for that. In consequence of the little eagerness shown by him, he is treated coldly by the Verdelins. For a week my two heroines are inseparable; they get up twenty times a day to embrace and sigh in each other's ear. During this time, the young sister comes every day to ask for my companion, and to scold him for not going to see the Comtesse; the services which she can render him are exaggerated, and at last he becomes infatuated, a thing not very difficult to bring about. He comes back enchanted with all that these ladies tell him, and he beats about the bush for an hour in his efforts to get me to approve of his leaving in two days to spend three with the Comtesse. I agree with all my heart. The next day—the next day is an unfortunate thing for certain people—the next day this Comtesse comes to dinner. Margency, on her arrival, changes his snuff-box, and for certain reasons. He bows profoundly, and is profuse in his compliments; but she does not say a word to him. He approaches her, and thanks her loudly for her kindness towards him; you know how lightly and indiscreetly he does a thing of that kind. He takes some Spanish snuff, and offers it to her; Madame d'Houdetot notices a miniature, takes the box, recognises the divinity, shuts up the temple, returns it to him with an indignant air, and leaves the profane creature without saying a word. She avoids speaking to him for the rest of the day, and, doubtless fearing to be compromised, breaks off entirely with the little woman, her sister, and their cousin, who has been nicknamed the Fairy in Blue; and all these people, who were so infatuated with her the day before, now call her a squeamish humbug. That is my story; if you do not think it good, my friend, tell me a better one. Good-night!

From M. GRIMM *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

Oh! my dear Emilie, allow me to forget for a moment in your company the cruel sight of which I am a continual witness. Had it not been for this campaign, I should never have had an idea of the extent to which misery and human injustice can go. Come and console your poor friend for a moment; alas! I would not have left you for anything in the world! however, I could not help it; how ever could I have taken this cruel sacrifice upon myself? I am still trying to understand.

We have seen the sun to day for the first time; but we have been reassured in regard to this phenomenon, and have been promised rain for to-morrow. I have lost my only remaining happiness, the society of the Marquis de Saint-Lambert; we are encamped three leagues apart from each other. I shall not feel safe until the end of the campaign; for we are ordered to march and countermarch without any reason. The enemy lighted his fires yesterday at eleven o'clock at night to have a joke with us, and decamped. His camp, which was considered to be impregnable, had not a single intrenchment.

Like yourself, I think that Rousseau is going mad, but I do not know why you should be surprised at it, my dear friend; I have always foreseen it, and I will never cease telling you that you are greatly to blame for having, so to speak, taken part in his early mistakes, by showing such weakness towards him; seeing the amount of influence you had over him, you should have employed it in bringing his disordered mind back to reason. I pray that you may not get mixed up in his extravagances, and may never again have to cleanse yourself of the offences of others.

The Marquis de Saint-Lambert has sent me a letter from the Comtesse d'Houdetot, in which she says that you are wonderfully well and are getting fat. That is the only way to make me acquiesce in my exile. She also says that you are very busy with your establishment at Épinay, so as to give up La Chevrette to the Baron ; does he intend to settle there immediately ? let me know what they are going to do.

I strongly approve your refusal to show your works to Diderot; such a mark of confidence should be reserved for your friends alone. You may remember, my dear friend, that we have often agreed that a woman cannot be too reserved on this point; few people are inclined to do justice to their talents, and many are only too ready to impute pretentiousness to them. Besides, it is right, and even necessary, to resent unjust treatment experienced from others, and to treat them according to the regard they show for us.

You must excuse my saying so, but the scene with your husband made me laugh like a madman. There is no doubt, however, that it is anything but a laughing matter, and that the reflections aroused by his extravagances are by no means cheerful. I cannot refrain from exhorting you to speak to him very firmly about the state in which he leaves his house; it is in that that your duty lies, and not in making up for what he ought to do, but does not do.

I have more than once noticed in Pauline the fault of which you complain. It does not make me feel the least alarmed on her account, because it contains the germs of more than one good quality, and of a good quality which is very necessary in the world, especially when we consider the present extent of the effeminacy and corruption of society. You must blame her disposition rather than your method. The little effect it has produced upon her brother is the proof of this. The flightiness with which you reproach her is a different matter, and may certainly be connected with the method which you have hitherto pursued with her. The most promising theories and speculations often prove false in practice. But, considering your impartial, active and watchful mind, there are few evils which you will be unable to remedy; but, as for myself, it is as impossible for me to guide you in the matter from the depths of Westphalia, as it is for our general to allow us to rest for two hours consecutively.

Picture to yourself that I am writing standing up, leaning against a rotten plank, in the midst of the cries of the inhabitants of an entire village, who are clamouring for satisfaction for the marauding and pillage of our soldiers. What will appear incredible to you is, that they have seized about 300,000 crowns' worth of linen. Severity does not restore discipline; people have been hanged everywhere—even women and children are massacred, when they resist the plundering of their houses. As yet I cannot forecast the length of the campaign, but I do not believe that it will be unreasonably long. I hear that a detachment may be sent to reinforce the army in Alsace; in that case, I know several who will soon reach the capital again.

Adieu! my dear friend, preserve yourself for both our sakes; remember that you will never have another friend so affectionate. I kiss that hand, so dear to me. Adieu!

From M. DE MARGENCY *to* M. GRIMM.

Château d'Épinay.

Well, my amiable friend, so you are still on the march, never resting? Still after those Prussians who are calmly crossing the Weser in your face? Well, as the song says,

> Et lon lan la, laissez-les passer:

such is my advice. I have handed to Madame d'Épinay all the parcels you addressed to me, and, since I am on the subject of her, I must speak to you about her. I can bear witness to her prudence and courage; if she cannot get well, she at least deserves to be in good health, she is so strict and exact in her diet.

We have been installed here for the last four days in order to leave the field open for the Baron d'Holbach, when it pleases him to go and settle at La Chevrette. On my honour, I think that this is the finest château, the freshest forest, and the most delightful shade in the world; really, it is all delicious.

The Baron and his wife are at their mother's; I believe, however, that they will soon come to inhabit this delightful abode. We are also expecting every day the delightful Marquis.

Ah! my friend, we miss you very much; it seems to me that we should all suit one another admirably. Without any reason for it, we have fits of laughter which make us exceedingly merry. You talk of nothing but rain in your letters; we do not know it here. We have a sun, fine weather, and it is devilish hot, a regular Toulon climate; it is true that we have no ball, still less hunchbacks to make dance. We are all upright as I's, and we have tolerably fine eyes. However, I know a philosophic eye, a league from here, which would make a good figure at your ball.[1] I will go to-morrow and see if it is still there.

I have just received a letter from the great Duclos; he has given me an account of something about which I asked him; but what astonishes me is, that he says nothing good about himself or bad about others.

Yesterday, we saw the old secretary of the French Academy at the worthy Monsieur ***'s; it was a case, as the Baron said, of time at the house of eternity. There was also a young lady there; I have never seen one who so highly deserved to remain one; I believe her to be as pure as a new-born babe; I do not know her name, but her face is as red and yellow as a pomegranate. We expect the Hermit with his dog to-day; I swear to you that he does not resemble the gloomy beau of Michel Cervantes. Between ourselves, I believe that he is as much a philosopher as Sganarelle was a physician.

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[1] The allusion is to Madame de Verdelin's husband, who had only one eye.

I am working here enough to make one shudder, and, to crown it all, I have only one song and one madrigal that are presentable. I should like to go as far as an eclogue; perhaps that will happen one fine morning. Adieu! my friend, I embrace and bless you.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

Château d'Épinay.

My dear friend, my companion has already informed you that we have settled down here; I had left him master of the house, and had gone to Paris to say good-bye to the Baron and his wife, who have gone to spend a fortnight at their mother's. On their return, they intend to take up their abode at La Chevrette. I took advantage of my journey to take a turn to your quarters; I arranged in order the manuscripts which M. de Margency handed to me; I transacted some other business quietly at my house, and returned at six o'clock; it was neither hot nor cold. I accomplished part of the journey on foot, nearly my usual dose of walking, and I felt no fatigue when I arrived home.

I have received a letter from Paris. Yes, truly, the grand army of Alsace is settled; is that true? It seems to me that we should have gained everything if I were to see you return to France. But what is this forest which they tell me of, through which it is necessary to pass, in order to overtake the enemy? It will surely be well guarded. Is it proposed to pass through it? That is incredible; and, if you march sheltered from the forest, you are not protected from an ambuscade; you can imagine that it terrifies me to think of it. Oh God! my friend—stop, I do not want to think of it any more, but I think of it without wanting to do so. I am afraid that the moment has arrived when you will no longer be safe. I do not venture to ask, for fear of being told that it is true.

This is a bad day for me, my friend; gloomy ideas, hardly any time at all to talk to you, a letter to write to my husband for some money, to try and get him to relieve his poor servants from the wretched condition in which he keeps them. I know that he is to receive a reimbursement of 20,000 livres in a few days; I should very much like to lay hold of some of it.

I have taken my children to visit the poor of our parish. We have distributed clothes to the little children. I have been pretty well satisfied with mine, but this visit will serve us for a text for a week, for their ideas upon poverty and its effects are very confused.

Adieu! my good friend. Did I tell you that we had gone over all our possessions? Everything is in a better condition than I imagined.

From M. D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

I have not had any letters. I am putting great pressure upon myself to avoid being uneasy. I intend to try not to speak to you either about you or myself. I feel sad, and the account which the Marquis de Croismare (who has just arrived) has given us of poor Desmahis' condition has not cheered me up at all. During the last three weeks he has grown more melancholy every day; he has had, in addition, several attacks of fever, which have affected his head. He has suddenly become devout to excess. Unfortunately for him, he always sees hell ready to swallow him up; he is devoured by remorse; he never thinks himself safe unless he has his confessor by his side. He has burnt all his writings; but the most scandalous thing in connection with this pretended reform is, that he has broken with all his friends, and has written a satire upon them, especially directed against Diderot and Voltaire, this being, according to him, the only means of expiating the sins of his past life. The news has filled us with consternation; it has explained to M. de Margency the silence maintained by Desmahis in regard to two letters which he ought to have received from me. He did not suppose that he was ill.

He has just written to him again, offering to go and shut himself up with him; for he flatters himself that, if Desmahis accepts his proposal, he will bring him back to his senses and make him throw his satire into the fire. The Marquis declares that some fragments of it are already current in Paris. He has given the Syndic to understand, with the politeness and delicacy of which you know him to be capable, that he thought him hardly fitted to preach reason and philosophy.

Some time ago, a note from Madame de Verdelin had destroyed the effect of a certain sermon which M. de Jully read to us. To-day he assures us that the Desmahis incident made him go back to his old principles; but, if he could see for twenty-four hours the poor penitent's compunction, I would not answer for it that he would remain as cool. It is a great misfortune to have only prejudices without principles, and to have never rendered an account of anything to oneself. It is an equally great misfortune not to have an opinion of one's own. I think that the great secret of not changing at the moment of death is to be consistent during life. It is very prudent in those who have doubts and scruples to clear them up, and to listen to them if they cannot remove them with sufficient certainty to live in tranquillity; but it is very insipid to pretend strong-mindedness out of regard for one's fellows.

We shall dine to-morrow at the Hermitage, weather permitting. I am very glad that you approve my refusal to show my writings to M. Diderot. If they were worth looking at, I believe I should have shown the same prudence. Good-night! my friend; I am going to look for my guests. Did I tell you that M. de Jully leaves to-morrow for Geneva?

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

We dined yesterday at the Hermitage—my companion, the Marquis de Croismare, and myself. We started at half-past seven in the morning, after I had taken my milk, and the gentlemen their chocolate. Rousseau was in an excellent temper; my mother and children came to meet us in the evening, and Rousseau returned with us.

The worthy Le Vasseurs are your devoted worshippers, and weep for affection and gratitude when they speak of you. The mother whispered to me, as if she were afraid that Rousseau might hear, "Madame, may I ask you for news of some one? Ah! Madame, we are under great obligations to him, as well as to you. Ah! if Madame knew—we get nothing given us, and—we owe a louis——"

You can guess that I did not wait to be told this twice, but I was obliged to put a stop to their confidences, which were becoming quite scandalous. They have found a letter; I do not exactly know what it is, since I would not allow them to enter into any details. I said to Thérèse: "My child, you ought to throw into the fire, without reading them, the letters you find, or to restore them to their owner."

The evening, before bedtime.

I am still utterly astounded! As I was writing to you, the Marquis de Saint-Lambert entered my room; I cannot get over my surprise. If you only knew how we all embraced him, and talked about you! how delighted we were to see him! He gave me your letter; how kind it is, and how much good it has done me! But, my friend, the Marquis says that you are sad; I do not wish it. Remember that my peace of mind is concerned. I am not nearly so glad to see Saint-Lambert as I am sorry that you have lost him; he has seen you; he has helped you to support your weariness. He told me that you were eager to talk to him about us; you must pardon us for having been for a moment delighted to see him.

The Comtesse d'Houdetot came an hour after his arrival, and found him here again! Alas! there are some people who have all chances in their favour. I still suppose that she knows how to appreciate this one. However, both appeared rather cold; but I see someone who is visibly bitterly grieved. I should pity him if a sentiment, which is neither honourable nor reasonable, could make me do so. The effect produced upon Rousseau by the appearance of the Marquis leaves scarcely any doubt in my mind that he is in love with the Comtesse. But, my friend, to return to you. Why were you so sad on the morning of the 26th? Saint-Lambert told us. I must positively know the reason of it. He will only be here (or, rather, at Versailles) for a few days, and will then return near you. He is silent upon the subject of his mission. I have still many things to say to you, but I must leave them for another time. The

Marquis has gone back to Versailles, and will return to us to-morrow.

From M. GRIMM *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

See, my dear friend, how greatly I am to be pitied! I have not even been able to get a moment's time to reply to several points in your letters which were most certainly worth the trouble. I am taking advantage of Saint-Lambert's departure and of an hour's quietness to talk somewhat freely to you. I shall now await his return with impatience to know what progress your health has made.

Well! so that good, that excellent head of yours is all abroad and quite alarmed at Rousseau's philosophy? My friend, all that he says turns upon the maxims which one whispers to children, and he is right. But act, speak; let those about you see you assisting the unfortunate with the delicacy and tenderness which are peculiar to you; let them see your indulgence towards others, your love for the truth; in fact, let them see you so contented in the happiness which you have enjoyed and in that which you have caused, that they may be jealous of it. Then, they will do good after due consideration, or even instinctively, as if it were natural to them; or, if they do not get so far as that, the reason will be that there is no material, and that, under any circumstances, nothing good could have been made out of them.

One of the things which makes you most dear in my eyes is the strict watch which you keep over yourself, especially in your children's presence. You must certainly make up your mind sometimes to blame before them that which really constitutes the happiness of life, but that is because society and its foolish institutions have corrupted everything. It is impossible to reform it; we must therefore submit. Children are very keen; while they seem to be playing, they really see and listen. How often has this fear spoiled the happiness of the moments spent by your side! The certainty (if one could feel it) that they would one day resemble us and endeavour to repair a necessary wrong by a thousand acts of kindness and good behaviour, to which they would only believe themselves more bound,—such a certainty would partly free us from this constraint. But who knows this? My friend, this makes us feel more than ever that it is not permitted to everyone to infringe certain rules of society. It requires solid virtues to give the right to despise what is called the pedantry of morality. Do good as you are accustomed to, and never speak to me again of your confounded sophist, who can only see things with one eye.

The Marquis is waiting for my letter. Good-bye! my dear friend; he will convey to you my homage and respect, and will tell Madame your mother how I revere her, and how devoted I am to you. I cannot feel alarmed, as you do, at her delight in changing her house, if she is well in other respects. I have received Margency's letter.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

Great news, as excellent as it is astonishing and unexpected! Rousseau has gone! Where? Guess. To Paris! To Paris? you will say. Yes, to Paris. And why? To see Diderot, to fling himself upon his neck, to ask his pardon for some letter which he wrote to him in much too strong language—I do not know why—a letter which Diderot did not answer. Although he declares that he is not in the wrong, he desires to go and swear an eternal friendship with him. If this step were sincerely meant, it would be very noble, but one must not have distractions when one wants to deceive. In my eyes, Rousseau is no longer anything but a moral dwarf mounted on stilts. Yesterday evening he came to my room and said: "My good friend, I must tell you a secret of which, this time, you will not disapprove." "Let us see." "I start very early to-morrow morning for Paris on a visit to Diderot. I want to see him, to spend twenty-four hours with him, and, if I can, to atone for the grief which we have caused each other."

I told him that I strongly approved of this resolution, but that I could have wished that he had taken it a little sooner. He then told me the history of this letter in such ambiguous terms, that I concluded that the pretended reconciliation was only an excuse to avoid the presence of the Marquis, whose intimacy with the Comtesse causes him sorrow which he is unable to conceal. I pitied him, and my words, which showed more sympathy than firmness, proved it. I had commenced a beautiful and touching speech, at least, so I considered it, when he suddenly interrupted me, to ask if I had a pocket-book which I could lend him to carry under his arm. This request appeared to me a strange one. "Eh!" I asked him, "what do you want it for, for one day only?" "It is for my romance," he answered, somewhat embarrassed. Then I understood the reason of his great eagerness to see Diderot. "Here is a pocket-book for you," I said coldly, "but it will be in the way on your visit; it will make you lose all the benefit of it."

He blushed, and flew into an extraordinary passion. I spoke to him in strong language about the absurd sophisms which he had retailed to me in order to justify a proceeding which I might have considered quite innocent, if he had not attempted to put a good complexion upon it by giving a reason for it which was not the true one. Amongst other things, I told him that, if he persistently attempted to sustain the part of a singular person which his heart did not dictate to him, merely in accordance with some system of vanity or self-love, he would end by becoming false by habit. He began to weep like a child, and told me that he saw that I no longer had any regard for him. I replied that I had never given him so many proofs to the contrary. At last he dried his tears, and left my room more in anger than sorrow.

This morning he came to see me at six o'clock, just after I had got up. For a long time he looked earnestly at me, without saying a word; then, suddenly, I heard him sobbing. "My poor friend," I said to him, "I pity you!" "You are a very curious woman!" he cried. "You must have bewitched me; otherwise I should never listen patiently to all that you say to me. What art can it be that you possess, the art of telling the harshest and most offensive truths without its being possible for anyone to feel aggrieved?" "My friend," I replied, "the reason is that your offences are only an error of your mind, and that your heart has no part in them——" "What the deuce has put that into your head?" he interrupted violently. "Know, Madame, once for all, that I am vicious, that I was born so; and that—and that you would not believe how hard I find it to do good, and how little effort it costs me to do evil! You laugh? To prove to you how far what I say is true, let me tell you that I cannot help hating those people who do me a kindness." "My friend," I said to him, "I do not believe a word of it; you might just as well say to me that you cannot help loving those who do you an injury."

He could not help laughing at my answer; but he touched me by begging me, with childlike confidence, to spare and pity him. "I do not feel that I have the courage," he said, "always to listen to you with the same coolness." "In that case," said I, "renounce my friendship, for I do not feel that I have the courage to deceive you." We parted very good friends; he did not take the pocket-book, but from what he said to me, I am much afraid that he will not forgive me for having extorted a momentary frankness from him.

The arrival of the Marquis and the departure of Rousseau have prevented me from speaking to you about Desmahis; he is very bad. He had received M. de Margency's message with transports of joy; he sent for the *valet-de-chambre* who had brought him the letter, and asked him about his master—where he was, and what he was doing. Then he dismissed him, desiring him to tell his master that he no longer had anything in common with him or other worldly people; that he begged him to think no more of him except to pray God to have mercy upon him; that he entreated him to profit by his example, and not to wait so long before repenting.

The poor Syndic was unable to listen to the account his servant gave him without shedding tears. We are all in great distress about Desmahis' future, and the present bent of his mind. My mother is completely silent on the matter; but I, who can read her heart, can see that she laments the manner in which certain persons abuse their office; however, she does not venture to blame them openly; I am sure that she is as indignant about it as we are; but she is still more annoyed at it for the sake of the good cause.

By-the-by, I have sent off two sheets of my romance, which I have copied, that you may give me your honest opinion about them. If you are satisfied, I shall continue it.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

I have received a letter from M. de Jully, in which he shows an amusing enthusiasm for his dear Geneva. He was ill when he arrived; and, as it is Tronchin who has cured him, he urges me, with an eagerness which is enough to make one laugh, to go and put myself into his hands; he talks of him as of the seventeen marvels, as if I did not know my preserver better than he does! But I am not at all unwell at present. I have left off milk by way of precaution; and, if I had not, for the sake of your peace of mind, made it a rule to tell you everything, I would not mention the passing feeling of discomfort and occasional headaches to which I am subject. But I must be careful not to complain, for I have often noticed that ailments of this kind are aggravated by thinking of them, and, on the other hand, grow less when we do not trouble ourselves about them. I will calmly await what destiny shall ordain for me, and will nevertheless thank De Jully for his zeal.

Rousseau has returned from Paris, where, according to his own account, he spent two delightful days. He and Diderot are delighted with each other; Diderot has sent me the most polite messages; but what is the use of that, when his actions contradict his words so completely?

Two days ago, I informed you that the Baron was coming to La Chevrette, but it is not so; Diderot has upset the scheme and caused it to be abandoned, by declaring openly to the Baron that he would never be seen in a place where he could not avoid seeing me and being brought into connection with a woman of so infernal a character. Margency, who spent yesterday in Paris, was present during this scene, and assured him, according to his own account, that I was no more eager to see him than he was to see me. He replied: "My friend, if she has persuaded you, that is one falsehood the more." Finally, the docile Baron has renounced all idea of the country for this year.

Will M. Diderot never do me the honour of forgetting me? However, I must be just; his answer to Margency convinces me that some one is persistently deceiving him about me. There is certainly something underhand going on which I cannot unravel; but it is not natural that Diderot, whom I do not know, who is your friend, and who is consequently just and honourable, should devote himself to injuring and crying me down without any object or reason. Rousseau has not brought his manuscript, and he has thanked me for having prevented his doing so.

After supper.

The Comtesse d'Houdetot has just had supper with us. She brought the Marquis de Saint-Lambert and Rousseau with her. The Marquis de Croismare declares that she entered like a princess upon the stage at the moment of the catastrophe. I asked him what that meant. He replied that he never took account of what he said; but, as for myself, I assure you that he did not say it without a purpose. She and Saint-Lambert seemed very anxious, and Rousseau was not cheerful. I determined, when we got up from table, to leave them, excusing myself on the ground that I needed rest. At last, this evening, I have heard from you; I see from the tone of your letter how sad and ill at ease you are. You allow yourself to be depressed, and you have not even the courage to complain; and in the meantime I am left without a letter to console me. Good-night! my dear friend. I hope to reply in detail to you to-morrow or almost immediately.

From M. GRIMM *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

I should very much like to scold you, my dear friend, but it is impossible; you are too amiable. One is obliged to fall at your feet and worship you unceasingly. However, if your long letters to me are written at the cost of your peace of mind, if your little excursions to Paris and the Hermitage without my permission are going to upset your health and regimen, what do you think will become of me? You say that you are sending me two sheets of your romance; so then you are spending all your time in working and writing? How precious to me is all that you do for me! But I shall have to pay very dearly for it, if it is prejudicial to your health!

Poor Desmahis' condition excites my sympathy; it does not, however, astonish me; the scene to which he treated us last year indicated a disordered brain. I could never understand how you have been able to adopt his crotchets for a moment. Your comments upon him and Margency are very just.

I was sure that Saint-Lambert's arrival would surprise you; it is the Prince de Soubise[1] who has procured him this commission. Do not regret a chance like that, for he will return immediately, and our campaign will be over before his. Why do you not tell me any more about Rousseau's amours? Have you not heard anything about them since the Marquis's arrival? You have good eyes: let me know, I beg you, what you think about the Comtesse. It appears to me that you do not suspect her of any harm. I am inclined to think the same of her, but yet it is necessary to know with whom one is dealing. Some time ago she informed Saint-Lambert that Rousseau was mad. "It must be a very decided case," said he, "since she perceives it!" You spoke like an angel to Rousseau on the day of his departure for Paris; his conversation deserves to be printed. If you had always spoken to him in that tone, you would have spared him much sorrow, but I am afraid that his folly is too far advanced for us ever to hope to see him happy and calm again. His asking for the pocket-book nearly made me jump out of my skin. A man must be very foolish to be false, and to try to make dupes of others.

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[1] Marshal of France, who was defeated at Rosbach in Saxony by Frederic II (1757).

I have never heard anything so amusing as the incident of Madame de Verdelin and the Comtesse. Really, your narratives are masterpieces. Why am I not by your side, my dear friend, to laugh at all these follies at my ease? But I have forgotten how to laugh. And how could I, when far from you? In my present melancholy state of mind, you can judge what would become of me if the knowledge that your health was upset were added to all my other troubles? Will October never come? It is sad to be so situated as to desire the return of the bad weather instead of being able to enjoy the fine. Do you, at least, enjoy it for both of us. Good-bye! my dear, my incomparable friend; I always end by being enchanted with you. Continue, I beg you, to pity me, and let me hear how Desmahis is getting on.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

I must tell you another story about our district; it is prolific in anecdotes this year.

Well, then, little Verdelin, in a moment of romantic enthusiasm, has taken her one-eyed old man into her confidence. She tried to persuade him that he would have been only too happy if she had chosen the Syndic. This excessive frankness was not so successful in her husband's case as in some romance or other from which the little woman borrowed the idea. Since then, Margency has been a much more frequent visitor, since he does not venture to present himself at his fair one's house. He takes it very philosophically, and when he does not put me out of patience, he amuses me and makes me laugh.

If I had wished, I could certainly have kept myself well posted in Rousseau's amours, or, at least, in Thérèse's gossip. She has even been several times to bring me her complaints, but I have always made her hold her tongue. Not finding me inclined to oblige her by listening, she went to confide in M. de Margency, who laughs and accommodates himself to anything. Although he does not seem to attach more credit than myself to what this creature says, he repeats it and amuses himself with it. I have even been obliged, more than once, to remind him that these tales, whether true or false, are displeasing to me, and that my friends ought to spare my sister-in-law, and with all the more reason if she did not deserve to be pulled to pieces. And, really, what foundation is there for it? Nothing but the information of a silly, jealous, chattering, and lying young woman, who accuses a woman whom we know to be giddy, trusting, and, certainly, indiscreet, but frank, honourable, sincere, and supremely good. I infinitely prefer to believe that Rousseau's head has been turned by himself alone, unaided by anyone else, than to suppose that Madame d'Houdetot woke up one fine morning a flirt and a vicious woman.

My opinion then is, from what I have been able to learn, as I tell you by fits and starts, that, forewarned as she was of our hermit's virtue, she has never regarded him in any other light than that of a friend, a confidant, a consoler, a guide, and that the harm that she has done is only the result of her inadvertence; the only object of the Comtesse in their solitary walks was certainly no other than to talk metaphysics about morality, virtue, love, friendship, and all their results; if the hermit had a more physical purpose in view, I know nothing of it; but the Comtesse would not have noticed it; if he had explained it in such a manner as to leave no room for doubt, she must have been utterly astonished; I know her well enough; she would do anything in the world to bring him back to a sense of his duty towards himself. Perhaps she may have kept this folly a secret from the Marquis out of regard for Rousseau? I will not guarantee that, by her kind-heartedness and honourable conduct, she has not heaped folly upon folly; perhaps she will even end by falling a victim to them, and may have every appearance of having committed an offence of which she may be perfectly innocent; I know only too well that this is the way it happens. I do not know what is being whispered about a letter from her, which Thérèse has found. It would be necessary, before all, to know if the fact is true, next, to see the letter and to make oneself acquainted with all the circumstances, before judging. What is certain is, that it is impossible to look at Rousseau without feeling compassion for him; he seems to have lost all hope; I have not seen him at all since his return from Paris. It is hard that a philosopher should escape you at the moment when you least expect it. I do not know whether your shares will go up in proportion as mine go down. I am always speaking of you to him, and he does not venture to show any impatience, because my mother, my children, and all our friends are never tired of talking about you. When his ill-temper masters him to a certain point, he takes up his hat and goes. Then the Syndic laughs. I myself no longer feel able to laugh; he is too unhappy.

You ought to have received my work, or will do almost immediately. Please make your remarks in the margin and send it back to me. The impression which this first attempt produces upon you will, I believe, decide my ambition. Good-night! my dear friend. The Marquis de Croismare has left us until Friday.

From M. GRIMM *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

I needed to receive better news about your health, my dearest friend, before I felt able to answer your last letter. You assure me that your present ill-health is nothing; I am bound to believe it, but I cannot help feeling utterly wretched when I think that you have been obliged to leave off the milk which agreed with you so well. I am eager to hear that you have resumed it with success; that is the only way to obtain forgiveness for the harm you have done yourself.

Do not think Monsieur de Jully's advice foolish —to take a trip to Geneva. The idea has occurred to me more than once, and were it not for the assurances that you have hitherto given me that you were better, I should before this have begged you to do so. We must hope that your health will not need Tronchin's assistance, but if it continues bad, there should be no hesitation.

Did Rousseau tell you that he did not take his work to Paris? Then he lied; for that was the sole object of his journey. I had a letter from Diderot yesterday, which describes your hermit to the life. Rousseau walked there, and went and took up his quarters with Diderot without having given him notice, simply to revise his work with him. Considering the terms on which they were, you will agree that this is rather strange. I see, from certain expressions which my friend has let fall in his letter, that there is some matter of discussion between them, but, as he gives no explanation, I do not understand it. Rousseau kept him pitilessly engaged on the work from ten o'clock on Saturday morning till eleven o'clock on Monday evening, and hardly allowed him time to eat or drink. When the revision was finished, Diderot talked to him about a scheme which he had in his head, and asked Rousseau to help him to settle an incident about which he has not been able to satisfy himself. "It is too difficult," coldly answered the hermit; "it is late, and I am not used to sitting up. Good-night! I start at six o'clock to-morrow morning. It is time to get some sleep." With these words, he got up and went to bed, leaving Diderot astounded at his conduct. That is the man who you think is so moved by your lectures. Add to this a singular remark of Diderot's wife, which I beg you will profit by. She is only a worthy woman, but she is a woman of good judgment. Seeing that her husband was very depressed on the day when Rousseau left, she asked him the reason. He said to her: "It is that man's want of delicacy which grieves me; he made me work like a common labourer, but I do not think I should have noticed it, unless he had refused so coldly to spend a quarter of an hour for my benefit." "Are you surprised at that?" said his wife, "don't you know him, then? He is eaten up by jealousy; he is furious when anything beautiful appears which is not his work. You will see that he will one day commit a great crime rather than allow himself to remain unnoticed. Come now, I should not like to swear that he would not take the side of the Jesuits, and undertake their defence."

Her opinion was just; but that is not what Rousseau will do; it is the philosophers whom he will attack. He will turn religious, and write against his friend, and, in his wrong-headedness, he will end like Desmahis with weakness, and that without anyone having anything to do with it. Keep well in mind what I tell you.

The Baron is a man who has no backbone, as I have always told you. His inconsistencies do not surprise me in the least. He never knows what he wants, and the last person who speaks to him is always right. Leave him to himself, my dear friend, and do not trouble about him. In another month or two we shall see each other again, and shall not care about anything else.

Let Diderot be to you as if he had never existed; that is the only way to treat prejudice and injustice. I have still a thousand things to tell you, but they will not give me leisure. We start to-morrow; we are always starting, ever on the march, and never advance. I hope, when we are at Cassel, that we shall be quieter. Take great care of your health: it is a trust which I confided to you. Remember, my dear friend, that I could not forgive you if you did not bestow all your care upon it. As soon as I have a moment free, I will finish answering your letter.

From M. GRIMM *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

I am really so angry that I cannot keep my temper. I have received two large sheets full of your romance, both written by yourself. Do you then really want to kill yourself? Oh, most adorable of all possible and impossible friends! What! without any regard for your health or respect for my injunctions, you have transcribed, with your own hand, these enormous sheets? I must, however, admit that, since I received the parcel yesterday, my anger has begun to pass away and to give place to the admiration which the work deserves. Really, it is delightful. I was very tired when it was handed to me: I glanced at it, and was unable to leave it. At two o'clock in the morning I was still reading. If you maintain the same standard, you will certainly produce a unique work. But you should only work at it when you really feel inclined, and, above all, forget that you are writing a book. It will be easy to introduce the connections. It is the air of reality which is always missing when it is not there at the first attempt, and the happiest flights of imagination cannot repair the loss. When I have a little peace (and God knows when that will be!) I will return you these precious sheets with some remarks dealing with mere trifles—a word to be changed here and there for my satisfaction; but only rarely. In truth, it is a masterpiece. If you will take my advice, you will not show the work to anyone until it is finished; for, although you might not perceive it, that would put restraint upon you in the future, and, while aiming at elegance of style, you would be less natural. Consider it as a monument reserved for yourself alone, and you will make it one that will be worthy of a woman of genius. Further, now that Rousseau no longer sighs for you, my poor friend, if you have shown him anything of these memoirs, I look upon you as having already quarrelled with him. His judgment is too keen for him not to be sensible how far removed your chief character is from his tiresome and pedantic heroine.

You certainly take a tragic view of Rousseau's amours. A foolish passion has never frightened me: unless the devil has something to do with it, the turn of reason must come again. The story did not agree with Madame d'Houdetot's frank and honourable character, and that reassures me. When a person has no hope, his head cannot turn altogether, and, like yourself, I would wager that Rousseau has none. While waiting to know what to think about it, we are dying of heat and cold. I am wonderfully well, but my work bores me utterly. I cannot tell you the reasons which make me believe that I shall change it next year, but I have fairly well-founded hopes; and these hopes are almost equal to certainties.

I am astonished at Madame de Verdelin's revelations to her philosophic eye; it seems that everybody (except ourselves) is mad. I see from your story that I have nothing to gain in all these follies. The fickle Rousseau will return to his old love, and I shall always be the mark for his injustice.

I respectfully salute Madame your mother, I beg permission to embrace Madame her daughter, and prostrate myself respectfully at the feet of the illustrious authoress of the Memoirs of ***.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

I give myself up to the hope which you hold out to me, that you will have no more campaigns; but I have only your word to rely upon, for I do not understand how it can be possible. I should like before all to see the present campaign over; I want you to repeat to me again, and more than once, what you have already said to me on this subject. My mother, to whom I have not been able to avoid confiding your hopes, does not dare to believe in them any more than I do. She charges me to wish you, from her, every kind of happiness, and a little more rest during the remainder of the year. We both fear that your health may in the end feel the effects of your continual movement from place to place during the excessive heat by which we are prostrated. Mamma suffers very much with her eyes; I am afraid she is threatened with the loss of her sight; her affectionate heart, full of trust in God, bears up courageously under the cruel prospect. Do you know that resignation to the decrees of Providence frequently takes the place of firmness? I admire my mother, and I am of opinion that such well-regulated devotion as hers may be a very useful thing; it is certainly most worthy of respect.

I am delighted at the pleasure my romance has afforded you. What a singular transition! Never mind; I say, then, that you encourage me to continue it, for I have such confidence in your judgment, that I am not afraid of your being deceived by friendship. In truth, since I have received your letter, I have no hesitation in persuading myself that I am composing a fine work; how do I know what may be the result? Sometimes it only needs such an expression of opinion to develop genius. When a person has a reputation to maintain, he makes efforts which he could not otherwise have attempted; at least, nothing is so stifling as self-distrust. I will send you the continuation of my work immediately. You must calm the wrath which overcame you when you received it. I did not copy the manuscripts which I sent you ; they are my rough copies, and I have kept the copies which I have had made, so as to insert in the margin the corrections you send me. I have shown my work to no one but Rousseau and the Syndic. The former appeared honestly astonished at it. M. de Margency says that it is nicely written, but in rather too familiar style. I do not think that it deserves all the admiration which Rousseau expressed for it; I am even tempted to put it down to his astonishment that it was not utterly bad.

Well, I was right when I maintained that Rousseau's amours were only so much gossip; there is not a word of truth in what Thérèse said. How glad I am that I always refused to credit it! The Marquis de Croismare, who arrived yesterday—more cheerful, I may observe, more amiable, more himself than ever—has had a walk with the Comtesse, who did nothing but talk to him in ambiguous terms, which, however, were as clear as daylight, of her passion for the Marquis de Saint-Lambert. M. de Croismare put her quite at her ease, and, at the end of a quarter of an hour, she confided to him that Rousseau nearly quarrelled with her the moment she spoke to him frankly about her feelings for Saint-Lambert. The Comtesse showed a heroism which did not make Rousseau indulgent towards her weakness. He exhausted all his eloquence to arouse scruples in her mind in regard to this connection, which he calls criminal. She is far from regarding it in this light, glories in it, and only thinks more highly of herself in consequence. The Marquis gave me an amusing account of this outpouring of heart. In any case, it seems to me that therein is to be found the solution of the frequent conferences between Rousseau and the Comtesse. This warmth, this activity, these mutual mysteries, all are reduced to nothing, and, if they do not do credit to their prudence, they at least sing the praise of their honourable conduct. I was sure of it. Oh ! if I had been in a hurry to judge, how greatly should I have regretted it !

I am troubled about Rousseau; he ought to have come four days ago; he did not do so, and I have not even heard of him. I have just written a note to him to ask him the reason; I am awaiting his reply with impatience. Good-bye, my friend ! I always leave you with regret, and, no matter what I write to you, I never tell you a quarter of what I have to say to you.

CHAPTER XVIII (1757).

For the better understanding of what follows, it should be said that Rousseau's passion for Madame the Comtesse d'Houdetot was genuine. He knew that she was so strongly attached to the Marquis de Saint-Lambert, that he saw no other way of winning her love than by destroying the Marquis. He was unassailable; there was no means of arousing suspicion of him, or of suggesting, with any semblance of probability, that he was guilty of wrong. To avoid frightening the Comtesse, he at first did his utmost to conceal from her the affection he had conceived for her; he devoted all the warmth of his eloquence to arousing scruples in her mind in regard to her connection with the Marquis; then, finding that this did not succeed, he pretended to believe that Madame d'Épinay also was in love with the Marquis, and was secretly trying to take him away from her sister-in-law. He gave her to understand that he was inclined to believe that the Marquis felt flattered by it. It was no use for the latter to swear that it was not the case; Rousseau continued to chaff him about it, and referred everything to this idea. This plan secured him a twofold advantage: he aroused the Comtesse's jealousy, and estranged her from her sister-in-law, of whose penetration he was afraid. This jealousy, being without any real foundation, was bound in the end to wear out the Marquis, to produce bitterness, and perhaps a rupture, between him and Madame d'Houdetot.

Just about this time, the Marquis received an anonymous letter, informing him that Rousseau and Madame d'Houdetot were deceiving him, and living together on most intimate terms. In proof of this, the letter adduced real facts, but disguised and slanderously arranged to suit the purpose of the author of the letter. I have always suspected Thérèse, and the same idea has occurred to nearly all those who are acquainted with this incident.

Few men have sufficient control over themselves to mistrust appearances that are strong, and the only thing that could destroy their weight was the profound esteem which the Comtesse deserved. M. de Lambert had a heated explanation with her, after which he rendered her the justice that was her due. As the Comtesse did not yet suspect Rousseau's feelings towards her, she took him into her confidence, and told him about the letter, which caused him such trouble and grief, and so aroused his anger, that it made him ill. At a loss to discover the writer, he did not hesitate to name Madame d'Épinay. "It is a treacherous act," said he, "which her passion for the Marquis de Saint-Lambert makes probable; she has no doubt thought of this plan for detaching his affections from the Comtesse." At last he adopted (or pretended to adopt) this idea so strongly, that, in spite of all the Marquis and the Comtesse could say to him, he behaved as if he had been perfectly certain of it. As has been seen from her last letter, Madame d'Épinay was far from suspecting the wrong being done to her; hence, she understood nothing of what Rousseau wrote to her.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

I really believe that poor Rousseau is going mad. Before informing you of what has just taken place, I intended to wait until I could understand something about it; but, after our explanations, I am no further advanced. The only thing that I can see through it all is, that his head is seething, that he is unhappy, that he does not know whom to blame; and that, being deprived of all real reasons for complaint, he accuses even his friends, and sees everywhere around him annoyances, dangers and plots, just as Don Quixote saw nothing but enchanters.

Feeling uneasy about him, I wrote to him, as I told you. My letter was as follows:

" My dear bear, I am anxious about you. You promised me, five days ago, that I should see you on the following day; you did not come, and you have sent me no message; you are not in the habit of breaking your word to me. You certainly cannot have any business to attend to; if you had any cause for sorrow, my friendship would feel aggrieved at your keeping it a secret from me. You are ill, then? Relieve my anxiety, my good friend; it is in proportion to the feelings which you know I entertain towards you."

On the following day, Thérèse brought this answer:

"I cannot yet say anything to you. I am waiting to be better informed, as I shall be, sooner or later. Meanwhile, rest assured that outraged innocence will find a defender sufficiently enthusiastic to give the slanderers, whoever they may be, some reason to repent their conduct."

I was so astonished at this letter, and it seemed to me so incomprehensible, that I questioned Thérèse about Rousseau's condition and the state of his head. She told me that he was violently agitated. When he received my letter he exclaimed: "Is it not adding insult to injury to wish me to go to her for consolation? I am being laughed at; but patience, patience!"

Thérèse knew nothing more about the matter. I sent the following brief reply to Rousseau:

"I want to know how you are; your letter tells me nothing about that; it is a riddle which I am utterly unable to understand. I expect from confidence and friendship language that is clearer and more in conformity with my feelings for you. You know whether you can command my services. At the first word I am at your disposal."

The following is the impertinent answer which I received to my second note:

"I can neither go to see you nor receive a visit from you, as long as my present uneasiness lasts. The confidence of which you speak no longer exists, and it will be no easy matter for you to regain it. At present, I can see nothing in your eagerness but the wish to extract from the confessions of another certain advantages which are likely to further your plans; and my heart, which is so ready to pour its confidences into another which opens to receive them, remains closed to artifice and cunning. I recognise your usual cleverness in the difficulty which you profess to find in understanding my note. Do you think me so gullible as to imagine that you have not understood it? No; but I shall know how to combat and overcome your subtleties by dint of frankness. I am going to explain myself more clearly, that you may understand me better.

"Two lovers, closely united and worthy of each other's love, are dear to me. I expect you will not know whom I mean unless I mention their names. I presume that attempts have been made to part them, and that I have been made use of to arouse jealousy in the mind of one of them. The choice is not very happy, but it appeared to offer the greatest opportunities for malice—and it is you whom I suspect of this malice. I hope that matters are becoming clearer. So, then, the woman for whom I entertain the greatest esteem and respect, with my knowledge, labours under the disgrace of dividing her heart and person between two lovers? And should I, whose heart is not devoid of delicacy or pride, quietly submit to be one of these two cowardly wretches? If I knew that, during one single moment of your life, you had been capable of entertaining such base ideas in regard to her or myself, I should hate you to my dying day. But I only tax you with having said it, not with having believed it. In such a case I do not understand which of the three it was that you wanted to injure; but if you have any care for your peace of mind, tremble lest you have been unfortunate enough to succeed. I have not concealed, either from you or from her, all the harm I see in certain connections, but I would have them terminated by a means as honourable as its cause, and I desire that an unlawful love shall be changed into an everlasting friendship. Should I, who never injured anyone, innocently be the means of injuring my friends? No; I would never forgive you, I should become your implacable enemy. Your secrets alone would be respected, for I will never be dishonourable.

"I do not imagine that my present embarrassment, which has now lasted several days, can last much longer. Doubtless I shall soon know whether I have been deceived. Perhaps I shall then have great offences on my own part to atone for, and I shall never do anything with a better heart. But do you know how I intend to make amends for my faults during the little time that I still have to remain near you? I will do what no one else will ever do—I will tell you frankly what the world thinks of you, and the breaches in your own reputation which you have to repair. In spite of all the pretended friends by whom you are surrounded, when you see me depart you can bid good-bye to truth ; you will never find anyone else to tell it you."

I replied as follows :

"Doubtless you possess incontestable proofs of what you dare to write to me, for a mere suspicion is not sufficient reason for accusing a friend of ten years' standing. I pity you, Rousseau. If I did not think you mad, or on the point of becoming so, I swear that I would not take the trouble to answer, and I would never see you again in my life.

"You see that your letter cannot offend me ; it cannot be agreeable to me, it does not even affect me. It will not need great efforts on your part to make you confess to yourself that you do not mean a word of all these disgraceful accusations. However, I am glad to tell you that you will not find such extravagance succeed with me. If you are inclined to change your tone, and to atone for the wrong you do me, you may come and see me ; but this is the only condition on which I receive you. Beware of speaking to me about my pretended reputation. Instead of thereby giving me what you call a token of friendship, give me one of the respect and esteem which you owe me by only using such language as I can permit myself to listen to. Besides, I would have you know that I care little for what is thought of me ; my conduct is good, that is sufficient for me. I will set you free, whenever you please, in regard to my secrets, however little it may cost you to keep them. You know better than anyone that I have none which it would bring discredit upon me to divulge."

I do not know, my friend, whether you will approve the manner in which I have acted. It is difficult to judge impartially when one is insulted by one's friends in a certain manner. You were quite right in saying that I should not come out of all this without annoyance. I hope, however that it will have no evil consequences. You will at least agree that this was difficult to foresee.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

Rousseau called after dinner, when we were all out walking. Finding that he could not speak to me, he asked permission to say a few words to me. I remained at a little distance from the rest. "Out of regard for you," I said to him, "I do not wish to have a scene in public, unless you drive me to it. Let us put off our conversation until after our walk, assuming that you have come in the only frame of mind which will make it possible for me to listen to you; otherwise, I have nothing to say to you, and you may go back again."

Having said these few words, I rejoined my friends. He appeared very ill at ease during the conversation; he even once or twice pretended to be going away; the gentlemen kept him back, and he remained. They bantered him upon his caprice; he came out of it very badly, but he remained. I did not say a word to him. The

Marquis de Croismare whispered in my ear: "You look upon this poor devil's tortures with the coolness of a Penelope, as if you were not the cause of them. I am sure that it is you who have turned his head."

After we had returned to the house, I went to my room, and told Rousseau to follow me. When we were alone, he said: "Abandon the cold and haughty manner in which you received me this morning; it freezes me; in truth, it utterly crushes me." "Do you not feel only too happy," I said to him, "to think that I am kind enough to receive you at all, and to listen to you, after your behaviour, which was as unworthy as it was ridiculous?"

I cannot give you the details of the explanation that took place between us. He threw himself at my feet with every sign of the most violent despair; he did not hesitate to admit his offences; he swore that his life would not be long enough for him to atone for them to his satisfaction. He still asserts that he was deceived by the assurance which had been given him that I entertained an unconquerable passion for the Marquis de Saint-Lambert. "It was a very great injustice on your part to have believed it," I replied, "and an unpardonable one to have supposed me capable of such disgraceful conduct, in order to be revenged for an alleged unfortunate passion."

He attempted to apologise to me for his behaviour with the Comtesse, but I refused to listen to anything on this point. "I am not fond," I said, "of talking about other persons' affairs unless I am obliged, and I do not need their testimony to believe them honourable. It would be too painful to me to find them otherwise, for me to allow suspicions against them to enter my mind." Next, I went through all his offences against his friends, and you may be sure that I did not forget you. The result of our conversation was, that I promised to forget those of which he had been guilty towards myself, if I saw in the future that he remembered them sufficiently well to keep him from wronging any of his friends. He seems to me to have made up his mind to leave this country and to return to his native place. He openly announces this intention; he even added that he would start as soon as he should have cleared himself of the horrible imputations that have been made against him.

What astonishes me is that for several days I have heard nothing of the Marquis or the Comtesse. I do not know whether I ought to go to meet them or to wait for them. I think that I shall decide to remain quiet.

Good-bye! my friend. The heat is killing, and I have a thousand little domestic worries which prevent me from talking longer to-night.

From M. GRIMM *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

I have only time to say a word to you, my dear friend. Never mind, I must make the best of it. I have received your two letters dated the 15th and 18th of this month, but I have not had time to read the last through or the copies which accompanied it. I am very sorry about the note which you have written to Rousseau. Do you not see that you ought not to have said anything to him, except that, not having heard anything of him, you were uneasy about his health, that you were sending to enquire after him, and to know when he was coming to see you? There would have been no harm in a letter like that. But why ask him if he was grieved or annoyed about anything? You had no reason to suppose that he was; and the question must have surprised him or have seemed suspicious. I do not understand his answer at all, but I would wager that there is some mischief behind. He could not have written to you as he did if you had kept to a simple note, whereas, now, I am afraid of explanations. I entreat you to play in all this the part that becomes you. You know that madmen are dangerous, especially when you play fast and loose with them, as you have sometimes done with this poor devil, owing to your ill-judged tenderness for his follies; some of the mud is sure to stick. If your note had been simpler, he could not have told you that your desire to console him was a mockery. I trust, however, that my wise and prudent friend will have remedied all, and anticipated in time the consequences of this chicanery, and that she will be able to inform me of the end of this ridiculous and extravagant incident.

What causes me real pleasure is, that I see that you are taking advantage of your position, and that you are spending your time agreeably. It will be delightful to me to find you again surrounded by your friends, beloved and esteemed as you deserve to be.

Adieu! my dear Emilie, so lovable and so beloved; I have scarcely time left to embrace you.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

Let me begin by clearing my head of all the trifles which I have to tell you. The Chevalier de Valory arrives to-morrow to take up his quarters in your rooms. The Marquis de Croismare is still with us; but you do not know that he is indisposed. I have taken special care of him; he was to have gone to-day. The Baron even came to fetch him; he said that he was quite well, and that he preferred to remain here; that he did not believe that he would ever be able to make up his mind to leave, because he was so happy. You can have no idea of his extravagance; he is really a charming person, whose gaiety is sincere, sustained, and delightful.

It is asserted here that the enemy have made a prodigious march, and that we are perhaps on the eve of an engagement; but, as the report is not general, we still hope that it has no foundation. Let us not summon uneasiness, it will come only too soon of its own accord. However, my friend, the Marquis de Saint-Lambert started again without seeing us; that is curious. He sent his apologies to me, excusing himself on the ground of his hasty departure; well and good.

Thérèse has told Monsieur de Margency that the Comtesse has forbidden Rousseau to see her.

It seems to me a long time since I spoke to you of my children. I must tell you what Pauline said and did the other day. She had given herself her usual airs; the governess and myself had represented to her in a friendly manner that she was making herself perfectly ridiculous; but that, since she would not believe us, it was her own affair. A few days ago, without paying any heed to our advice, she continued in the same style, in spite of a warning glance that I gave her; the Marquis de Croismare burst out laughing, and told her that she apparently took him for her doll, and was playing the lady with him; next, he told her she was too big to behave so childishly; in short, he bantered her for an hour. She got angry, he only laughed the more; then, with a thoughtful air, he said to her: "Come, Mademoiselle, perhaps I am wrong; you have adopted so decided a tone in telling us your opinion, that I begin to believe you know more than I supposed; let us settle this matter once for all." It was a question of a letter written by the King of Prussia, which is current, which Pauline had declared to be bad, because she did not understand it. The Marquis put a number of questions which it was impossible for her to answer, because she knows very little about the things which it was necessary to know in order to understand the letter. Hence it was easy to prove her folly. She got out of it very well. She was at first greatly humiliated. Then, with tears in her eyes, she said to him : "Monsieur, I thank you for the lesson. It is rather severe, but I will not forget it. Let us play shuttlecock."

Is not the child adorable? My friend, I mean to make an angel of her.

Rousseau returned to the Hermitage the day after the last letter I wrote to you. Thérèse came to see me afterwards. She declares that he blames himself continually for his behaviour towards me. Since the severe sentence which Madame d'Houdetot has pronounced upon him, he wrote her two long letters, which she has not answered; and yesterday, still according to Thérèse, the Comtesse sent for him to come and console her for Saint-Lambert's departure. He did not approve of the pleasantry. No one knows what answer he has made. I am convinced that there is not a word of truth in all this; it is pure invention on the part of Thérèse. But what is the good of it, and what object can she have?

The Comtesse called here yesterday evening for a moment, the first time for an age. Her eyes were as large as her fists, and she had a bad headache. She lamented continually the injustice of men, and the nuisance of persons whose thoughts are gloomy. The Syndic declares that the end of the storm which threatened me may very well have fallen upon her.

I forgot to tell you that I have begun to take my milk again the last two days, and find that it agrees with me very well.

The following day.

Rousseau is ill. I merely sent a message to know how he was; he sent me in reply a few words which show how his bile is stirred, but nothing which is worth telling you.

From ROUSSEAU *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

I thank you for remembering me. I have never suffered so much from my complaints as during the last few days; everyone, beginning with myself, is unendurable to me. In my body I am tormented by all the pains one can possibly feel, and in my soul by the pangs of death. I went yesterday to Eaubonne, hoping to get some relief from the walk and some pleasure from Madame d'Houdetot's gaiety. I found her ill, and returned feeling even worse than when I started. I must positively withdraw from all society and live alone till my illness finishes in one way or another. You may rest assured that on the first day I have any respite I will come and see you without fail. Be good enough to give my respects to Madame d'Esclavelles, and my kind regards to the gentlemen. I beg you will all excuse my sulkiness; believe me, when I say that everyone of you in my place would be in bed, never expecting to get off it again.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

August 2nd.

I have not heard from you for a week. Is it possible that you can leave us at this moment without news of your whereabouts, or how you are getting on? We spend the day on the highroad waiting for your letters, but none arrive. We look at each other in silence, and try to reassure one another; but, notwithstanding, we cannot conceal the fact that we are uneasy. All the couriers have arrived, everybody has had letters except myself and the Marquis; so, then, it may be possible that you have not written. I suppose that you are still in good health, and keep telling myself that nothing can have happened to you; but, in spite of that, this silence makes me uneasy. I imagine all possible kinds of risk, and that is hardly enough to reassure me.

Oh, my dear friend, you may guess how I should feel if anything had happened to you! The poor Marquis will go mad if this continues. His son is reported killed; really, I cannot understand how it is possible to endure this kind of torture.

August 3rd.

No letters again to-day! it is inconceivable! I declare a woman must have tremendous control over herself to stand it. Nine days without news! and at such a moment! Is it possible that letters can be stopped or detained at the post under such circumstances,[1] without any feeling or regard for the uneasiness of the public? The poor Marquis has heard nothing of his son or his brother; I really should not be surprised if he lost his head; at least, I cannot conceive how anyone who is at liberty does not start at once. My mother comforts me as far as she can; but I can see that, in the bottom of her heart, she is as uneasy as I am.

August 4th.

Your letters to me must have contained some astonishing news, for I now have no doubt that they have been confiscated. The Marquis has heard from his son and his brother; they are quite well. It will be a long time before the poor man recovers from the anxiety which this silence has caused him. There was almost a riot at the post yesterday; more than four thousand people wanted to break open the gates and seize the letters. But, even if the first had been confiscated, I should have received others; I have not heard from you since the 22nd of July. Ah! my friend, I can no longer stand it!

August 4th, 10 *p.m.*

I have received four letters at the same time, and now I am easy. I have not answered them, my dear friend, so as not to delay this. If anything else happens, write me an open note, for really this torture is more than I can bear. Adieu! We did not need this test to feel how dear you are to us. How amiable of you to be in good health!

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[1] Referring to the battle of Hastenbeck, a village in Hanover, in which the French defeated the forces of the Duke of Cumberland, July 31st, 1757.

From M. Grimm *to* Madame d'Épinay.

The enemy has been thoroughly beaten, Madame, and we are all in excellent health. The only persons killed, amongst our acquaintance, are MM. de L*** and de C***. We have taken twelve pieces of cannon. If I do not write to you for a few days, I beg you will not feel uneasy; we are in the midst of the disorder and tumult of victory. Your letters, if I receive any, will be a great consolation to me.

This will cut short our campaign. Let our friends know about us. If I am not mistaken, there is a letter for me from Épinay; for me it is as good as a battle won; still, I must close this. You know my regard and devotion for you. Do not forget to give my respects to Madame your mother.

Another note from the same.

An extraordinary messenger is being despatched, Madame, and although I have just written to you, I do not wish to miss this opportunity of paying my respects to you. We are all in wonderfully good health. Yesterday's battle was neither bloody nor decisive. I am afraid that you will be a long time without news, for I suspect that our general keeps back the couriers; at any rate, you ought to get this letter. Adieu! Madame; give my compliments and respects to everybody, and thank you a thousand times for the kind letters which I have just received.

The following day.

Madame, the glory of the day of Hastenbeck belongs to your friend M. de Chevert. He executed the most admirable manoeuvre in the world; he and his detachment ought to have been destroyed a thousand times over; he alone did everything; the rest of the army took no part in the engagement. The officers who served under him speak of him with ecstasy. If we have not profited more by the advantages he has gained, it is not his fault. Hameln surrendered yesterday morning. The garrison is to march out with the honours of war, and not to serve against us again.

My respects and blessings to all those whom it may concern. All of you who love the pathetic, listen. Thirty hours after the engagement, an officer found a wounded soldier on the field of battle. "General," said he, "will you get me taken away? It is not that I complain, but I have had enough." At the same time he bared his breast and showed him five gunshot wounds. That is one of the characteristics of our soldiers; we are continually hearing similar stories.

How many thanks do I owe you, Madame, for the excellent health which you enjoy. I hope that I shall soon render them more worthily, but we are still in a state of chaos.

From M. GRIMM *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

I have sent you a few lines, my dear friend, by (I think) the first courier who has left for the last four days. If this irregularity has caused you any uneasiness, I shall be in despair; one moment is enough to destroy your health. Now, let us talk a little, for I am quite tired of all this, and I want to comfort myself in the company of that precious soul whom I love and revere more and more every day. Alas! the battle was anything but decisive, and leaves me only a very vague hope of rejoining you. I have so many things to say to you, that I do not know how to set about it. However, let us see; and let us first discuss the subject of Rousseau. His story grieves me; the man will end by going mad. I have long foreseen it, but we must consider that his residence at the Hermitage will be the cause of it. It is impossible for one so hot-tempered and ill-constituted to endure solitude. The mischief is done; you would have it so, my poor friend, although I have always told you that you would be sorry for it. It is an easy matter for me to make up my mind about him; he does not deserve that anyone should take an interest in him, because he is ignorant of the duties and delights of friendship; but I should like to protect you against all its possible dangers; and this is what I do not find easy. It is certain that the end of all will be a deuce of an upset which cannot be foreseen. I consider it a great misfortune that you have already laid yourself open to receiving insulting letters. One can forgive one's friends everything except insult, since this can only be caused by a feeling of contempt; and whatever may be the state of my friend's mind, I could never forgive him for having conceived such a feeling for me. I think your answer is weak. When anyone is insulted, he should let it be seen that he resents it. You should have ordered Rousseau to come without adding a word; you should have listened to all that he had to say; then you should have made him feel the unworthiness of his conduct, shown him the door, and forbidden him to enter your house again. Then he might have fallen at your feet and obtained pardon. But no, you still treated him as a friend. However, if, since your last letter, you have treated him with your usual kindness, you will find you have committed a great fault, which you will deeply regret, because it will be followed by still greater impertinence. Greater! no, that is impossible. But if you do not know how to resent such conduct, you are wanting in the respect which you owe to yourself. My only consolation in regard to this incident, my dear friend, is to hear that you treat Rousseau very coldly, that he complains with a due sense of shame, and that you repeat to him, with all proper seriousness, that his offences estrange you from him; and that you feel that your regard for him will not return until he has atoned for them. Now, this cannot be done in a day. That is the way to treat people when we wish to keep our friends. As I have often told you, you are not sufficiently sensitive to insults. One ought to resent them, not exact vengeance for them; that is my principle.

I have just received the second instalment of your romance. The parcel arrived in a very dilapidated condition, very wet and quite open. I ask you as a favour not to send me any more. We are in such a state of confusion that I do not know when I may hope to continue this delightful reading. I can only see that you are killing yourself with writing, and that pains me mortally. What you tell me about the various opinions passed upon it is very well put and very amusing. You can rely upon yours and my own, and I promise you that the public will agree with them at the proper time and in the proper place. I will not send you any corrections; they only have reference to certain expressions which we will alter when we read your manuscript together. Up to the present time, I have not found a single important one; I am bound to believe that it is your rough copies that you have sent me, since you say so, but it is inconceivable.

10 *p.m.*

Since my letter was written, I have learnt, almost for a certainty, that I shall rejoin you at the end of this month or the commencement of the next. You will never have an idea how eagerly I desire it. Adieu! my adorable friend; I hope with all my heart that you have taken advantage of your last explanation with Rousseau to adopt towards him the tone which becomes you. Be assured that it is impossible to yield to the weakness and unreasonableness of others without unpleasant results. Tell me if that is your way of thinking. If you have followed the plan I propose to you, let me know what success you have had. Good heavens! how tired I am of not seeing you!

From Madame d'Épinay *to* M. Grimm.

My dear friend, God grant what you say is true: that I shall see you again at the end of this month or at the beginning of the next. Alas! I do not dare to hope for it. Everyone maintains that the war will continue, and you do not give any explanation of your hopes; I understand nothing about it, and I wait for time to decide my fate.

This time it appears as if Rousseau has broken off with the Comtesse in earnest. He had written letter after letter to her; at first, she had persistently refused to answer them; at last, she wrote him a very short note, informing him that, for the future, she would neither write nor receive another from him. The day after this decision was announced to him, he was seized with an attack of fever, accompanied by delirium. Thérèse, thoroughly frightened, informed me. I sent the doctor, who was here, to see him, and he assured me that his condition was not serious—at least, he hoped not. This reassured me, and gave me courage to resist the pressing message he sent me on the following day, asking me to go and see him. I made the excuse that I was somewhat indisposed. In any case, I acted rightly, for the worthy old Madame le Vasseur has since told me that he was resolved to confide everything to me. When I refused to go, he sent for M. Diderot, who immediately came to the Hermitage to see him. I do not know what may have taken place between them; but I imagine you will have no difficulty in learning from M. Diderot. Since we are on the subject of Rousseau, I wish to have a regular explanation in regard to the matter, to reply to your questions in order, and never to mention the subject again.

You say that I did wrong in asking him whether he had any sorrow, and that it is quite natural that he should have thought I was laughing at him. But, my friend, I neither asked him nor did I offer to console him; read my note again. Besides, it seems to me that I should have had good reason for doing so, since he left abruptly, after having been sad and out of temper for several days. If, since receiving his letter, I have not treated him as usual, I declare that it is not from resentment, which I do not feel, considering that he has not really suspected me for a moment; it is impossible, I am sure of it; and I am equally sure that he would not have allowed himself to accuse me to anyone else. It is a falsehood on his part, no doubt; but a falsehood which his folly has suggested to him, so that he may have the opportunity of quarrelling, and, consequently, be quit of gratitude in regard to myself, and may set out for his own country in order to publish the report that all his friends had united to drive him from here by continued ill-treatment. To be able to complain to men of their fellows is an almost certain means of securing a good reception from them. Rousseau's folly makes me pity him, and his falseness inspires me with the profoundest contempt. You see that I treat him far worse than you advise me to; for you can well believe that I cannot show any friendship to a man whom I despise; but neither can I show resentment against a fool. I, therefore, content myself with indifference.

He has been very ill. I have provided him with all the assistance that was in my power; but I have not been to see him myself. Three days ago he managed to drag himself here; the second night he nearly died. I sent for his womenfolk. He is a little better to-day; but he inspires me with pity. Since the conversation which I had with him yesterday, I confess that indifference has given place to the feeling which is hardly more flattering. He is not yet in a fit state to return to the Hermitage.

Yesterday afternoon, being alone with me, he told me with sobs that, if I did not have pity on him, he had no other resource left him but his own despair, and that he would kill himself. My first impulse gained the upper hand. I replied: "Well, you would act quite rightly, if you do not feel that you have the courage to be virtuous." He remained dumbfounded, and I also. My words were severe; but they had been uttered, and it was now impossible to go back upon them. However, I toned them down as much as I could, by pointing out to him that I only attributed his errors to his disordered brain, and I defended his heart. I pretended to believe that it was possible for him in the future to regain a frank and honourable tone, and I restored to him the courage which he seemed to have lost. I consoled him. If I did wrong, I make confession of it; but I am incapable, when I see anyone in trouble, of preserving my calmness or leaving him without consolation.

The day after to-morrow, I am going to Paris to spend a few days with Madame d'Holbach; my milk will be brought to me every day from the country; by this means I hope that my diet will not be upset. I will post this letter on my arrival, and I hope to add a few words before I leave.

The next day.

I have received a delightful letter from the Marquis de Saint-Lambert. He talks about the Comtesse, and I gather that he is not satisfied with her. "If I hardly saw anything of you during my visit, blame Madame d'Houdetot for it; if you see her, tell her that I am very much attached to her. I certainly tell her so myself, but she prefers to hear it from others."

I think that he has behaved very honourably towards the hermit; he has treated him very well, although Rousseau sees in him a mocking and contemptuous air which he had not observed before. And this Comtesse, who writes me letter after letter! I have had three since yesterday, asking me most earnestly to write to the Marquis, and convince him, if I can, that she adores him; at the same time she gives me many details which show clearly enough that he would like to get rid of her. I made a fitting reply, and I do not intend to mix myself up in this intrigue in any way.

I have also heard from M. de Jully; he is enthusiastic about Geneva and the Gevenese. It is the most beautiful country in the world! the people the most honourable! If you believe him, their like has never existed. Is it true? Certainly they do not enjoy that reputation. He also tells me that he has been to see M. de Voltaire, who received him most cordially, but he hardly says a word about him. This, however, would have been a subject more calculated to interest me than anything else that he says. I imagine that he hardly ventures to look at him without crossing himself, and I would wager that, if the Marquise had not ordered him to go and see him, he would not have set foot in his house. He is leaving for Lausanne, and will be away for about a week; that is a new way of "residence." He proposes to make a complete tour through Switzerland.

Rousseau returned to the Hermitage this morning. This man exhibits a confidence which would be too absurd and too impertinent, unless it proceeded from a conscience without reproach. You recollect that I asked him, when he left to take up his abode at the Hermitage, to ask M. Latour, who had taken his likeness, to get it copied for me. One day this summer, when I reminded him of this promise, he told me that M. Latour had replied that he would copy it himself and bring it to him. Rousseau accepted the offer, and we agreed that he should make the painter a small present, for which I would pay. This morning, when he took leave of me, he showed me a letter from his friend informing him that he should have his likeness in three or four days. "As you will not be here," said he to me, "whereabouts in your room would you like me to have it placed?" "At your house," I said to him. "I do not refuse your likeness, but do not be in a hurry to bring it. I must see whether you deserve that I should accept it." He was somewhat astonished at my answer. In spite of that, I have treated him more gently for the last few days, for he certainly inspires me with pity.

At the Baron d'Holbach's,

Tuesday, 7 p.m.

During my journey here the weather seemed as if it had been arranged on purpose to enable me to travel without any discomfort. Make yourself easy about my health, my friend. I will take care of it, and render you a good account of it. I got down at the Baron's house. The pleasure with which my arrival was greeted has really touched me. I found the Baroness's mother and sister here. Ah! what a mother and what a sister! and what a foolish family! for there is a brother there! Ah! it is unheard of . . . I am like him, however, according to this sister; but it is rather hard upon me. Luckily, they all go to bed at nine o'clock.

Good-night! my friend; I am expecting to hear from you to-morrow.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

I had hoped to hear from you yesterday, my dear friend, but the courier did not come. I must be patient until the evening, and meanwhile amuse myself with hope as well as I can; and it is by thinking about you and giving you an account of all that I am doing, that I am able to kill time until your return. I see that it will be difficult for me to get away from here before the Baronne's accouchement; the poor little woman is neglected by all her relations, especially by her mother, in a disgusting manner. She and her husband seem to want me to wait. That is what you have got by coming, you will say. It is true, my friend, but I no longer had anyone to come to see me; the Syndic was going to desert me; Rousseau was returning to his solitude; I should have found myself completely alone, and I preferred to come to Paris to do my friends a service, and to amuse myself in their company. Good-bye! my dear friend.

From M. GRIMM *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

Very good; I understand that someone has been rather unwell; without the narrative of Rousseau's follies, I should have known nothing about it. How, then, can I feel confidence in you when you assure me that you are in excellent health? My friend, I am afraid you do not understand how essential and all-important your health is to my peace of mind. However, I do not thank you for not having been to the Hermitage, and for not having yielded to Rousseau's solicitations. Before this it would have been a heroic action; now, your refusal is only one of your ordinary acts of prudence. You have guessed quite correctly; he has confided everything to Diderot; the latter, who seems to me much affected by Rousseau's trouble, told me. I shall not get to know the details by this means, unless, when talking to him on my return, I excite and stir him up; then he may, without knowing it, let out some instalments of his secret. I am very glad that Saint-Lambert writes you nice letters, and that Rousseau's extravagances have not diminished his liking for your society. As for Rousseau, I confess that his condition inspires me with as much pity as it is possible for a madman to inspire. I cannot tell you too often, my dear friend, the least evil of all would have been to let him start for his native land two years ago, instead of banishing him to the solitude of the Hermitage. I am convinced that his stay there will, sooner or later, cause us trouble.

The Baron d'Holbach had told me that you were going to spend five or six days at Paris, but I refused to believe it. How can you run the risk of overwhelming yourself with fatigue unnecessarily, of upsetting your health and diet, and of driving me to despair? If the slightest accident happens to you, it will certainly be your fault. You will necessarily find yourself brought into close intimacy with the wife's family, which may lead to serious inconveniences. My dear friend, commit no follies, I beg you.

When I give you advice, in order to refute me, you proceed to prove laboriously that you are behaving well. So much the better, my friend; provided that you are well, you have only to assure me of it, without troubling yourself to cover three pages in proving it to me. I have told you what I think about the hermit that you may profit by it. What you have done in regard to the matter must form the subject of conversation in our future walks; if I had the time, I would certainly reply to all your fine sophistries. But you are, in yourself, so worthy of esteem, respect and adoration that, if you do not behave with all the wisdom and prudence of which you are capable, and which your position requires, I shall never in my life be able to forgive you for the injury which you will inflict upon yourself.

By-the-way, I forgot to tell you my opinion of M. de Jully's letter. What you have heard said of the Genevese is not altogether false, and, nevertheless, what M. de Jully tells you is true; they are different at home from what they are elsewhere. The Genevese, when travelling, are considered false, liars, and selfish, because they only travel on business; they regard foreigners as persons brought into the world to fill their pockets. But when they have returned home they are kindly and affable; they do great and noble actions, but, nevertheless, they are terribly avaricious.

I am not surprised that M. de Jully is enthusiastic about M. Tronchin. I shall join with him, in the proper time and place, in the endeavour to persuade you to visit this famous physician. However, I hope that your health will not require his attention if you continue to take care of yourself.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

Everyone declares that the Maréchal will arrive on the 10th. Oh, my friend, can it be really possible? This idea has given me strength. What! I shall see you again in a fortnight! I meant to rest myself to-day, and not to write you until to-morrow. I have a very bad cold in my head, but it is nothing. My mother, whom I informed yesterday of the news of your arrival, said to me: "Tell him to be sure and let us know the exact time; it would be an unpardonable crime on his part to embrace any other of his friends before us; tell him so from me."

Do not take me by surprise, however, my dear friend; my frail organism could not endure such excess of joy unless I were prepared for it. Oh, my friend, you in whom I have placed all my trust and happiness, so then we are to be reunited! My head is weak, my friend, and will not let me continue.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

What a noise he makes, this too amiable friend! I ask your pardon a thousand times; I confess that I presumed too much upon my strength, and that the desire to be of service to Madame d'Holbach made me undertake this little trip at a very unfortunate moment for my health. But, my friend, while I admit I was wrong, I must admit at the same time, that I should probably not have avoided the critical change which tells me that there is some cause for my ailments, hitherto unknown, but perhaps somewhat serious. I have not sufficient confidence in Tronchin ever to be able to make up my mind to go and consult him. However, if you wish it, I will write to him; but I should prefer to wait until your return, the more so as I am not ill at present. I do not suffer, I only feel languid; a little rest will perhaps set me right until further orders.

I have received a letter from the Abbé de V***, who intends to spend three weeks in Paris. He says that he hopes to come and see me, if my circle of friends is agreeable to him; meanwhile, he criticises it, and blames me for having multiplied my tastes and pursuits. He seems to doubt my friendship for him and his relations; I have rendered them too many little services to need to make any apology. I send you my reply, which I do not think bad. The best thing is, that I had not heard him mentioned since his visit here, two years ago, except on one occasion when he wrote to me to give me a commission, and to ask me for news of all my "wonderful friends." I contented myself with saying to him that I did not know any "wonderful" people, and that I was ignorant whom he referred to.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to the* ABBÉ DE V***.

You will believe me or not, as you think fit, my dear Abbé, if I tell you that the only wrong I have done to my friends and myself is, that I have always thought more of them, and of satisfying even their whims, without taking myself into consideration at all. In consequence of this system of mine, I had as many masters as friends, and discovered the secret of making friendship, which is perhaps the only compensation for the misfortunes inseparable from human life, a source of trouble. To have a will of my own seemed to me a crime. I did things without number which were not congenial to me with a complaisance which was even less congenial, and which was not even suspected. I was continually the victim of it without anyone being grateful to me for it. I have considered the matter, and have begun to venture to be myself; I no longer take any account of the whims of others, I only do what I please; I find myself much better for it, and it seems to me that my friends are none the worse.

That being assumed, my dear Abbé, you can believe me when I tell you that I shall be pleased for you to come and see me here; I apparently think it, since I tell you so; if it were not so, what reasons would oblige me to do so? I know no reason which can make me say the contrary of what I think, still less of what I feel. If you are just, you can doubt neither my attachment for you, nor the pleasure which it gives me to see you; if you are not, I should only waste my words in useless assurances. Do not forget that, with a little temper and obstinacy in one's disposition, one always demands more than one is willing to grant; but, if everyone were to attempt to order his friends according to his own views, to subject them to his tastes and wishes, who would have any friends at all?

It would be rather amusing if it were considered a crime on my part to do my best to cultivate what abilities I may possess, especially as my tastes have always been honourable, and I have made no pretence of doing anything but amuse myself. If it is true that my tastes are too numerous, I consider this a reason for thinking more highly of myself. Besides, I do not claim that others ought to imitate me; everyone can do as he pleases in regard to that, and everyone is right. My principal occupation is, to find out whether I have reason to be satisfied with myself; and, when I am, I think that others should be the same. If I had always had the courage to think and act thus, I should have entirely avoided the appearance of fickleness and inconsistency with which you reproach me. However, my dear Abbé, you might look upon me differently from those persons whose acquaintance with me is only superficial.

As for my friends, I must have explained myself badly if you understood from my last letter that I no longer saw MM. Rousseau and Grimm and the Baron d'Holbach, or that their tone was changed; that is not the case. I see them frequently; I see hardly anyone else, for the reason which I have just given you, namely, that I no longer arrange my society for the sake of others, but for myself alone. I only admit to it those who are congenial to me; there are many to whom *it* would be congenial whom I do *not* admit. As for you, my dear Abbé, it is difficult for me to believe that you are ever a *hors-d'œuvre*[1] anywhere, whatever you may say; still less at my house. Honourable people are welcome anywhere. Whatever may be the difference between their opinions and ways of thinking, they know that that can make no alteration in the regard and marks of esteem which they owe one another when living in the same society. Therefore, provided you are just and indulgent, as you certainly ought to be with beings who are not perfect and whose like you are, I am sure that you will add one to the number of the worthy people whom I receive at my house, and that we shall both be the better for it.

Besides, I am so convinced of your friendship for me, that certainly I shall never in my life be annoyed at anything you say to me. I know your sentiments; they are pure and sincere, and I do them justice. I have thought it my duty to make you acquainted with mine, and I flatter myself, my dear Abbé, that you will approve of them.

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[1] *i.e.*, a useless guest.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

Épinay.

My dear friend, I have returned to Épinay; the state of my health has permitted me to do so, and I am impatiently awaiting the news of your arrival. I regard it as the seal of my restoration to health.

Mademoiselle le Vasseur came this morning with enquiries from Rousseau, whom I informed of my return yesterday. There is something in the wind. M. Diderot has been to the Hermitage twice this week; and the result of these conferences has been an eight-page letter from Rousseau to Saint-Lambert. No one knows its contents, but it is believed to have been written by Diderot's advice. Mademoiselle le Vasseur heard him say to Rousseau, when he was leaving: "Take my advice, write to the Marquis; I do not think you can avoid it; but write as I have told you, and I promise you that you will be the better for it." He has also seen the Comtesse at Madame de Verdelin's. They had a long interview, and the hermit came away in tears. He says that before the year is out he will have seen his native place again.

Note from M. GRIMM *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

My dear friend, I am on my way. I shall not answer your two last letters which I have just received, and for which I thank you. Thursday evening, or, at the latest, Friday morning, I shall be at the feet of all I hold dear. Should your health not allow you to come to Paris, write me a line and let me find my keys there. Adieu! my dear friend. I am on my way; do you understand that I am on my way?

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

I certainly hope to be in Paris before you, my dear friend, but I must write to you to satisfy my heart's desire. Besides, my health may perhaps keep me here in spite of myself. It is useless to conceal from you any longer how weak and languid I feel; you will see for yourself only too well. However, it is a fact that the mere news of your arrival has done me appreciable good. I have been infinitely better since the moment I was sure about it. It has made my mother young again, my children are more sensible, and Linant a little less foolish. Such is the effect of sudden shocks upon the heart and mind.

This morning, Rousseau again broached the subject of his offences against me. You shall have the details of the conversation on your return. Meanwhile, I think that I ought to warn you of the hermit's feelings towards yourself; I have discussed the subject with him several times. He answered that he did not wish to die unjust towards you, that he acknowledged offences which he had aggravated by not having the courage to atone for them, and that he was waiting impatiently for your return to throw himself upon your generosity. "Help me, help me," said he, in an agitated manner, "to recover a friend who has never ceased to be dear to me." I promised him to try and persuade you to listen to him. I promised him nothing else; it is for you to do the rest. My penitent black (for I am sure he is not a penitent white)[1] swears that his whole happiness is staked upon making you forget his offences. The better we know his pride, the more reason to believe that his attitude is sincere; but he needs to be supported and encouraged. I am only asking from you what you are sure to do if you are satisfied with him at the outset; if you are not, I ask you nothing.

As soon as M. Grimm returned, Madame d'Épinay resumed her Diary.

CONTINUATION OF THE DIARY.

The state of my health alarms me, and, for the last week, has prevented me from enjoying the greatest of blessings, that of again seeing M. Grimm in our midst. He arrived in excellent health. We all went to meet him. My mother was up first that day, but, by a curious fatality,

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[1] Referring to certain lay brotherhoods, the members of which made special profession of various penitential exercises They were called *noirs*, *blancs*, *gris*, *bleus*, *verts*, *violets*, according to the colour of their robes.

I do not think I was ever so ill. The first thing in the morning I suffered from violent palpitations; it required all my eagerness to see M. Grimm again to give me strength to drag myself along. He was greatly struck by the change in me. We spent the first evening at my mother's, and the whole of the next day at the Baron d'Holbach's; two days later, we returned to Épinay, where Rousseau was waiting for us. M. Grimm, whom I had warned that he would find him there, predicted to me that the explanation between them would end in mere talk, and that Rousseau would say nothing that he ought to say, adding, "If he takes one step, I will take four, you may rest assured of that."

M. Grimm had guessed rightly. Rousseau ran to meet him, holding out his hand, not like a man who has done wrong and is anxious to repair it, but like a generous man who holds out his hand to a guilty person in token of forgiveness. M. Grimm received him in the manner which he had long since adopted towards him. At the end of half an hour, he withdrew to his room, where he remained some time. Rousseau did not appear to be at his ease. Suddenly he said to me: "It is late; Grimm has not come down; shall I go and look for him? What do you say, Madame?" "Just as you please," I replied; "but if you do so in the same frame of mind as when he first arrived, with the same air of patronage——" "Good heavens! Madame, your tyranny is inconceivable; would you have me publicly declare my offences and my pardon?

that does not suit me at all." "I thought, Monsieur, that it was the part which became you after you had publicly declared your injustice. Was it in the silence of your study that you accused him of having caused you to lose the bread you were endeavouring to earn? was it in the bottom of your heart that you suspected him of crying you down?" He turned his back upon me abruptly, and went into the garden. M. Grimm came into the room again, and, not seeing Rousseau, asked me laughingly if I was satisfied with his reception. "Certainly not," I replied. He went on to banter me upon the credulity with which I had believed in his repentance. "I would wager," he added, "that he no longer reproaches himself for the wrong he has done to you." However, in the evening, Rousseau went to see M. Grimm in his room, when everybody had retired; he congratulated him on his return, and asked him about his journey; then, as he withdrew, he took his hand, and said, "Come, dear Grimm, let us henceforth live on good terms, and forget, both of us, what has passed." Grimm began to laugh. "I swear to you," said he, "that what has happened as far as you are concerned is the least of my anxieties."

After this handsome explanation they separated, and yet Rousseau was not ashamed to say to me on the following day: "You ought to be satisfied, Madame, and so ought Grimm; I have humiliated myself sufficiently in order to please you both; but if it will restore my friend's affection, I do not regret it." My astonishment may be imagined when I heard the details of this pretended humiliation.

Monsieur d'Épinay put in an appearance here for the first time for an age. He appeared somewhat embarrassed by the presence of M. Grimm, of whose return he was not aware. He did not venture to confess in his presence that for more than a month he had been living in ignorance of what was going on in his own house. My mother asked him, in the presence of Monsieur Grimm and the Marquis de Croismare, who is staying here for a few days, if he had brought the money according to our latest arrangement. He recovered himself, as if he had been dreaming, and humbly apologised for having forgotten it. He declared that he had been thinking of it for the last three days; that the money was ready, but that, by a curious fatality, he had forgotten it when he started. "Nothing is easier than to set that right," said my mother. "M. Grimm is going to spend to-morrow in Paris; he will no doubt be kind enough to call upon you for the money, and to bring it back to us in the evening. You need only give him a note for your valet." "Very well," he answered; "I will be there, even without giving the note, and I will hand over the money to M. Grimm." "If you are at home," rejoined my mother, "he can give you back the note; if not, he can make use of it." Monsieur d'Épinay, after a little discussion about the note, promised to write it before he left. But, after dinner, he privately ordered his carriage to be driven to the end of the avenue, and then took up his hat as if he were going for a walk. I distrusted him, and begged him not to go out before he had given the note to M. Grimm. "I am coming back," he said; "are you afraid that I am going to run away?" "That might very well be," said Linant slyly, rubbing his hands, without knowing what it was all about, "for I have just seen Monsieur's carriage going up the avenue." M. d'Épinay looked at poor Linant as if he could have killed him, the Marquis burst out laughing, and M. Grimm, who had said nothing, at my mother's earnest request handed M. d'Épinay the necessary writing materials; and my husband wrote the order to pay us the amount he had agreed to give us.

The satisfaction which I feel at M. Grimm's return only makes me more alarmed about the state of my health. I feel that I am getting weaker every day; sometimes I am utterly prostrate; at other times my sufferings prove to me only too clearly that some unknown cause threatens me with speedy destruction. I frequently have racking pains in my head which almost drive me mad, and these attacks are followed by several days of languor. Alas! my mother, my children, M. Grimm!—you will be far more to be pitied than myself if my forebodings prove true! I have never clung so earnestly to life; I believe I should find it very hard to resign myself if I had to lose it now. Why must fear and sorrow be always in such close attendance upon happiness?

I have at last yielded to the importunities of my mother and M. Grimm, and have consented to go and consult Tronchin. However, I shall begin by sending him an account of my sufferings since his return to Geneva; and if he considers it indispensable that I should undertake the journey, I shall be obliged to make up my mind to it.

On my return to Paris, after several months' absence, I went without delay to see Madame d'Épinay. I was alarmed to see how thin she had become, and at the general change in her; but what struck me most was a convulsive twitching, which had so drawn out her features that I could hardly recognise her. I felt truly touched by the devoted attention and proofs of attachment to her shown by all those around her. I was also well satisfied with her children, but much more with the daughter than with the son. M. Linant, uncertain in his opinions, plans, and system, had caused his pupil to contract a habit of flightiness in his ideas and studies, which made him incapable of any sustained application. Besides, he confided to me that, unknown to Madame d'Épinay, a master came four times a week, by the father's order, to give the son lessons on the harpsichord. "As the greatest part of his time is taken up with music," said he to me, "it is impossible to work much at anything else." I represented to him that he had done wrong in not mentioning it to Madame d'Épinay, who certainly did not mean her son to waste his time in so useless a study. "Ah, Monsieur!" he replied, "we must leave something for papa's satisfaction as well. Madame will be agreeably surprised this winter. It will divert her, and I assure you that the time is not lost, for the boy has made remarkable progress; he will be the first musician in Paris." "I doubt, Monsieur," said I, "whether his mother will be pleased by it; she has complained to me about the little progress he has made in his studies. I am not surprised at it." In truth, after talking with the child, I found that he had a decided passion for music, and little inclination for other exercises, but he was also free from vicious tendencies. Pauline had learnt but little, but her firm and decided character, united to an upright heart and accurate intellect, had helped to furnish her head with principles and ideas which were certainly worth all the learning which could be expected from a child twelve years old, and her reasoning powers were remarkably developed for her age.

As for Madame d'Épinay, she seemed to me greatly alarmed at the state of her health, and the more so as she did not expect any relief from M. Tronchin. Only those who lived with her continually could form an idea of her condition. From time to time she was heard to say she was very ill, and, two or three days later, she was to be seen in apparently the best of health. This made Duclos say one day, amongst a number of people: "I know the solution of the riddle, and I know it from a trustworthy source: she is going mad; Grimm is tyrannising over her. I had predicted it to her, but she refused to believe me; she has never had any sense and never will have any."

CONTINUATION OF MADAME D'ÉPINAY'S DIARY.

I have received an answer from M. Tronchin; if it does not console me much, it gives me greater confidence in his skill and knowledge than before. He says there certainly must be some immediate cause for the continual derangement of my health, but that, even if he could take upon himself to pronounce an opinion upon the cause from such a distance, he would never venture to undertake to remedy it unless he had me under his eyes. He further says that my condition requires the greatest care. He does not think it dangerous, especially if it is left alone; whereas a single remedy, if misplaced, might possibly produce the most disastrous results. He ended by advising me not to make the attempt. I will follow his advice; I have made up my mind to that.

So, then, there is no cure for me; but there is a positive torture in the persecutions of my mother and all my friends, who have already begun to worry me persistently to promise to go and spend some months at Geneva; M. de Jully writes to me in pressing terms about it; lastly,

M. Grimm is unable to absent himself, being detained by the Prince; but he promises to rejoin me immediately. My mother, although attacked by the fear that the world may blame this journey, nevertheless unites with all my friends to induce me to make up my mind to go. Their solicitations are useless; can I take upon myself to leave so many people who are dear to me, perhaps never to see them again? I am only just reunited to M. Grimm, from whom I have been separated during the last six months! Can I leave my mother at her age? Then—my children; can I abandon their interests, which are already so neglected, and which can only be properly looked after by continual watchfulness? The picture frightens me. So many reasons for uneasiness are too much for my courage. That is decided; I shall declare to them that I shall never be able to make up my mind to it, and I will entreat them not to say any more to me about it; if needs be, I will forbid it.

A few days after this decision, Madame d'Épinay had a fresh attack, longer and more violent than the preceding ones. This time she thought her condition so serious, that, at the end of the week during which the crisis lasted, she suddenly of her own accord made up her mind to go to Geneva, and her husband wanted to accompany her. When she had taken this resolution, she wrote me the following letter:

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. DE LISIEUX.

It is settled, Monsieur; I have made up my mind to set out for Geneva; my condition during the past week has been such, that it seems infinitely less painful to me to part from all who are dear to me, than to witness the grief which they endeavour to conceal from me. I intend to start in a week; I should have liked to start to-morrow, but that is impossible. Thus, you have all exhausted your efforts in vain to persuade me to the resolution which I am taking to-day of my own accord. I have little hope of being cured, but I suffer too much here to be able to resign myself to it; perhaps even when I am once under the care of M. Tronchin — however, the great point is to get there, and that is what in reality I have little hope of doing. I wanted to take my son with me; several reasons urge me to do so. During my absence he would be solely under M. d'Épinay's authority, and what would be the result ?—utterly disastrous for him. If I can get to Geneva, the strict manners of that city cannot but be beneficial to him; the sight of a free people, the enemy of luxury, will elevate his mind; change of surroundings will give a new turn to his ideas; and he will be stirred to emulation by good examples. He will contract habits of work and reflection during the seven or eight months which it will certainly be necessary to spend at Geneva; besides, it is a consolation which I have not the courage to refuse myself; happily, it agrees with my child's interests. My mother will have more authority over my daughter than she could have over my son; I feel no anxiety about Pauline if left to her care and that of the governess. But, if I die on the journey, I beg you to think only of my son; spare no pains to make such an event turn to his advantage. If he is unable to feel adequately the extent of the loss which he would thereby suffer, put it before him in so striking a light that it may never leave his memory, and that it may be sufficient in the future to remind him of it, in order to check him in the irregularities into which everything will combine to drag him. Have no fear of increasing the horror of my last moments, provided that they may be profitable to him. I hope that I shall have courage to endure them! But my mother, my poor mother! It will be most painful to me to leave her. Who will take care of her in her old age? Who will dry her tears? To you, my dear Grimm, the beloved and precious friend of my heart, to you I intrust her. You will be greatly to be pitied!

Happily, I have been sufficiently self-controlled up to the present to set my affairs in order. I do not know whence I have derived this firmness; I should never have thought myself capable of it. How I dread the moment when I shall awake!

I was afraid that Monsieur d'Épinay would raise objections to my journey, but, on the contrary, he agrees to it with the greatest kindness; he even insists upon accompanying me, which I did not ask him to do. He consents to my keeping

Linant and my son at Geneva, and leaves it to me to settle their allowance. He has told me that I might rest assured that he would make no alteration in my mother's position; he has asked her to keep my daughter, and has offered to pay for her board and lodging; but my mother, while consenting to take my daughter and her governess, refuses to accept anything for their keep. He tells me that he intends to reduce his household during my absence, in order to get his affairs in better order. I hope all these good resolutions may last; but I do not venture to count upon it. I have informed my friends to-day of my intended journey; if I had not been afraid of being thought rude, I should have started without saying a word to anyone; I dread the offers of advice, opinions, and regrets. Who feels more keenly than myself the sorrowful aspect of the resolution which I have taken? M. Grimm has spared me a host of suggestions which he surely knows far better how to make than they do; he has promised to come and see me again. Adieu! Monsieur; I hope that I shall see you once more before I leave.

From ROUSSEAU *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

You may be sure that, had it not been for the weather, you would have seen me yesterday. I am terribly uneasy about the state of your health. In other respects, I think that your resolution is wise. Adieu! my dear friend; although I am very ill myself, you shall see me to-morrow morning at the latest.

Madame d'Épinay spent the last days before her departure in a state of the greatest agitation, overcome alternately by fear and hope. The grief of her friends at losing her, the evidences of their attachment to her, the efforts they made to conceal their trouble from her and to strengthen her courage—nothing escaped her mind nor her heart. But a violent scene which she had with Rousseau almost rendered her incapable of starting, so great was the impression produced upon her by the man's falseness. During the last days which she had spent in the country, Rousseau's attachment to her seemed to have greatly increased. The day before she left Épinay, while they were alone together, her letters were brought to her. There was one for Rousseau, addressed to her house, which she handed to him.

After reading it, Rousseau became so annoyed that, thinking he was alone, he swore and smote his head with his two fists. "What is the matter?" said she to him; "what news has upset you like this?" "Zounds!" he replied, throwing on the floor the fragments of the letter which he had just torn between his teeth, "these people are no friends! They are tyrants! What an imperious tone this Diderot adopts! I don't need their advice!" Madame d'Épinay picked up the letter. "I hear," wrote Diderot, "that Madame d'Épinay is starting for Geneva, but I do not hear that you are to accompany her. Do you not see that if she has done you such great injuries as you imagine, it is the only way to discharge your debt to her in full, and to enable yourself to break off decently with her afterwards. If you do nothing of the kind, and allow her to start in her present state of health, being as ill-disposed towards you as she is, she will make it a charge against you from which you will never be able to clear yourself. Then, again, are you not afraid that your conduct may be misinterpreted, and that you may be suspected of ingratitude or some other motive? I am quite aware that you will still have your conscience as a witness in your favour, but will that be sufficient by itself, and can you venture to neglect the testimony of others?"

"What is this supposition?" asked Madame d'Épinay; "what reason has M. Diderot to think that I am ill-disposed towards you? what wrong have I done you, if you please?"

Rousseau recovered himself, as if he had been dreaming, and remained dumbfounded at the imprudence which anger had just caused him to commit. He snatched the letter from Madame d'Épinay's hands, and at last, when pressed to reply, said: "It is the consequence of my old uneasiness—but you told me that it was unfounded. I have forgotten all about it, as you know well. Would it really please you if I were to go to Geneva?" "And you have allowed yourself to accuse me to M. Diderot?" asked

Madame d'Épinay. "I confess it," he replied; "I ask your pardon for it. He came to see me at the time my heart was heavy, and I could not resist the inclination to confide my trouble to him. How is it possible to be reserved with one who is dear to us?" "It is your opinion then, Monsieur, that it costs less to suspect a woman who is a friend and to accuse her without probability or certainty?" "If I had been sure, Madame, that you were guilty, I should have been careful to say nothing of the kind; I should have felt too humiliated, too unhappy." "Is that also the reason, Monsieur, which has since prevented you from disabusing M. Diderot?" "No doubt you were not guilty; I have not had the opportunity, and it became a matter of indifference."

Madame d'Épinay, in her indignation, would have turned him out of her room. He fell at her feet and asked her forgiveness, assuring her that he would immediately write to M. Diderot to clear her. "Just as you please," she said to him; "nothing that you may do can any longer affect me. You are not satisfied with doing me a most mortal injury; you swear to me every day that your life will not be long enough to atone for it, and at the same time you describe me to your friend as an abominable creature. You allow him to continue to hold this opinion, and you believe that the whole matter can be settled by your letting him know to-day that you have been deceived." "I know Diderot," he replied, "and how strongly he is influenced by first impressions.

I was waiting for some proofs in order to justify you." "Monsieur," she replied, "leave the room; you presence offends me. I am too happy to think that I am leaving; I could not undertake to see you again. You can tell all those who may ask you, that I never desired that you should accompany me, because it would never be fit for us to travel together, considering the state of your health and mine. Go! and let me never see you again."

He left the room in a rage. Madame d'Épinay sent for me, as well as for M. Grimm, with whom I was walking. We found her utterly exhausted by the impression which Rousseau's duplicity had just made upon her. She admitted that she had brought it upon herself by her readiness to pardon his latest extravagances. M. Grimm proposed to go and see Diderot on his arrival in Paris. Rousseau remained in his own room during the evening, and did not appear again until the next day, just when Madame d'Épinay was starting. Then he went up to her and said: "I think, Madame, that I ought to intrust you personally with the letter which I am writing to Diderot. I hope to prove to you, in the course of time, that I am not so guilty as might be imagined. This letter contains all that it behoves me to say. I ought to have written sooner, it is true, and I have told him so. It now only remains for me to ask you to let me stay at the Hermitage until your return, or, at least, until spring." "It is at your disposal, Monsieur," she replied, "as long as you are comfortable there." With these words she took the letter and got into her carriage.

The letter was sent to Monsieur Diderot, and Monsieur Grimm went to see him on the following day. When he entered upon an explanation, Diderot began to laugh. "What do you mean?" said he; "what are you saying about justification? Read, then, and cease to be a dupe for once in your life, if you can." "What are you thinking about," said Rousseau in his letter, "to send your letters to me to Madame d'Épinay's house? I have told you twenty times that all those which passed through her hands were opened; the last was opened like the rest, and has caused a fearful row between us. I was obliged to enter into explanations, to endure false reproaches. This woman is mad to be on good terms with you; she will never forgive me for having told you the truth. It is useless for you to say anything. She and I are quits, and I do not appreciate the necessity of following her; it is impossible for me to do so, and I answer for it to you that she does not care in the least about it herself."

The effect produced by this letter upon M. Grimm may be imagined. It was useless for him to tell Diderot the truth about the facts; he could not destroy his prejudices; but he insisted upon his remaining silent, and they agreed to communicate to each other all that they might be able to discover, until they had found out the reasons for Rousseau's course of action.

Madame d'Épinay knew nothing of this fresh proof of Rousseau's duplicity. She spent the last four days before her journey with her family and friends. Her departure was delayed for twenty-four hours by her son's slight indisposition. Meanwhile, Madame d'Houdetot, who had been to Paris to see her, returned immediately to her country house, in the idea that she might perhaps be able to persuade Rousseau to leave with her sister-in-law. She did not know what had just passed between them. She thought she was doing a service to both, and she did not communicate her project to anyone. Its only effect was to make Rousseau write Madame d'Épinay a letter which will be quoted later.

Madame d'Épinay, on the day before she started, left her mother and daughter after dinner, without having the heart to say good-bye to them. She spent the evening with M. Grimm and myself. When I arrived at her house, I found them both deeply moved. I did not then know the reason. I have learnt it since, and I ought to say a few words about it, for the better understanding of some letters which follow.

One of the results of Madame d'Épinay's disposition was, that she felt more ashamed of having been Rousseau's dupe than annoyed by the injury he had done her. She thought that the result would be a rupture which she could not avoid without loss of self-respect. She saw Rousseau without resources and wished to find a means of providing for his future without compromising herself. She spent part of the afternoon in writing down her intentions in this respect, in order to put them into my hands; but, being afraid that M. Grimm might blame such an excess of generosity, she wanted to keep it a secret from him. He entered her room without being announced. His presence confounded Madame d'Épinay, who hastily, and with an air of confusion, which did not escape Grimm's notice, crumpled up her papers. "You have disturbed me," she said to him. "I confess that I should prefer not to show you what I am writing; but if this secrecy troubles you, you will pain me greatly." "Certainly not," replied M. Grimm; "I feel too sure of deserving your confidence, and I have too many reasons to believe that I possess it entirely, to be offended because it suits you to keep anything from me. However, permit me to point out to you that there are circumstances in which a secret of this kind might be prejudicial to you, without your being able to foresee it. If what you are writing has not anything to do with Rousseau, I have nothing to ask you; but if it concerns him, either directly or indirectly, I must ask you to do nothing without my being informed of it first." "My friend," replied Madame d'Épinay, "it does concern him; but I certainly cannot tell you what it is. I beg you, do not ask me such a thing!"

At this reply M. Grimm, who knew all the possible serious results of a false step on Madame d'Épinay's part, argued the point vigorously, and even went so far as to remind her that she had more than once experienced the evil consequences of not having been frank with him; this reproach struck her forcibly, and she ended by confessing her plan to him. It was easy for M. Grimm to prove that she could do no more good to Rousseau without disagreeable consequences to herself. "Let things go on as they are," said he, "and give me your word that you will take no steps in regard to him without letting me know." She gave him her word, threw what she had written into the fire, and we spent the remainder of the evening as pleasantly as the fact of so painful a separation allowed.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

On the point of starting.

My dear friend, I am just starting, and when you receive this note, I shall already be far from you. Oh, my knight, my dear Grimm, summon up all your courage to endure my absence, whatever may be the result of it! This is not the moment for us to give way to emotion, or to abandon ourselves to gloomy presentiments. Bear in mind that I am leaving with you a precious trust, the care of my mother and my daughter; comfort her, my worthy and honourable mother. Watch over her carefully; she is going to be deprived of the fruit of her labours, of the watchful care of an affectionate and obedient daughter; let her find again in you all the feelings with which my heart is filled towards her. If the result should deprive her for ever of this consolation, it is you who must close her eyes. Let my daughter learn from your lips her mother's unhappy lot. Forgive me the expression again, my friend; instil into her the "principles" which I owe to you. Adieu! adieu, then! I intend to devote all my care to repairing my health and making myself capable, on my return, of enjoying the affection of a friend whose image is deeply graven on my heart; that alone is my stay, my courage, and my hope.

I have just received the enclosed letter from Rousseau; I shall not answer it. I merely wish him to know that I have left; perhaps I ought to show it to M. Diderot. I see that it was not only Duclos who was trying to alienate him from me; Rousseau has perhaps contributed to that even more.

Adieu! once again. I hope that I shall bear the journey well; I feel strong enough for that. The prospect of happiness is a powerful remedy in which I place all my confidence.

From ROUSSEAU *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

Madame, I am informed that your departure is put off and that your son is ill. I beg you will let me have news of you both. I should be glad if your journey could be put off altogether by your own restoration to health, but not by the loss of his.

Madame d'Houdetot talked to me a good deal on Tuesday about this journey, and exhorted me to accompany you, almost as pressingly as Diderot. This eagerness to get me to start on a journey, without any regard for the state of my health, caused me to suspect a kind of plot, of which you were the moving spirit. I possess neither the skill nor the patience to verify things, and I am not on the spot, but my judgment is pretty sure, and I am quite certain that Diderot's letter does not proceed from him. I do not deny that the desire to have me with you is highly complimentary to me; but, not to mention that you have shown so little warmth about it, and that your travelling arrangements were already made, I cannot allow a lady friend to make use of the influence of another to obtain what she herself could have obtained better than anyone else. In all this I seem to see an atmosphere of tyranny and intrigue which has put me out of temper. I have perhaps given vent to it too freely, but only towards your friend and mine. I have not forgotten my promise, but one cannot control one's thoughts, and all that I can do is to tell you mine on this occasion, that I may be disabused of them if I am wrong. I can assure you that if, instead of acting in this roundabout manner, you had pressed me in a friendly spirit, if you had told me that you were very anxious for me to go, and that I should be useful to you, I should have neglected every other consideration and accompanied you.

I do not know how all this will end, but, whatever happens, rest assured that I shall never forget your kindness towards me, and that, when you no longer wish me to be your slave, I shall always be your friend.

Before Madame d'Épinay's departure, M. Grimm received the following letter from M. Rousseau. He sent it to M. Diderot; and it was then that the latter began to abandon the prejudices with which others had done their utmost to poison his mind against a woman so worthy of his regard. I had asked M. Grimm to keep me informed as to this person's behaviour; he sent me his letters; and we agreed not to show the one which follows to Madame d'Épinay.

From Rousseau *to* M. Grimm.

Monday, the 29th.

Tell me, Grimm, why do all my friends declare that I ought to accompany Madame d'Épinay? Am I wrong, or are they all bewitched? Can they all be under the influence of this base partiality, which is always ready to decide in favour of the rich, and to impose upon poverty the additional burden of a hundred useless duties which render it harder and more inevitable? I am content to leave this question to you alone. Although you are doubtless prejudiced like the rest, I believe you are sufficiently just to put yourself in my place, and to judge of my real duties. Hear my reasons, then, my friend, and settle the resolution that I ought to take, for, whatever be your advice, I declare to you that it shall be followed at once.

What is there to oblige me to accompany Madame d'Épinay? Friendship, gratitude, the services I may be able to render her. Let us examine all these points.

If Madame d'Épinay has shown me much friendship, I have shown her more. Our attentions have been mutual, and at least as great on my part as on hers. We are both ill; I do not owe it to her any more than she owes it to me, that the greater sufferer should be obliged to look after the other. Because my maladies are beyond remedy, is that any reason why they should count for nothing? I will only add one word: she has friends who are in better health and better off, less jealous of their liberty, less pressed for time, and who are at least as dear to her as I am. I do not see why any one of them should consider it his duty to accompany her. By what strange freak, then, should it be incumbent upon me alone, who am, the least of all, in a position to fulfil it? If Madame d'Épinay were sufficiently dear to me for me to abandon myself in order to amuse her, how could I myself be so little dear to her that she should purchase at the expense of my health, my life, my trouble, my repose, and all my resources, the attention of so awkward a flatterer? I do not know whether I ought to offer to follow her, but I do know that, unless she suffers from that hardness of heart which is produced by wealth, and from which she has always appeared to me far removed, she ought never to accept the offer.

As for kindnesses, in the first place, I am not fond of them, I want none of them, and I feel no gratitude for those which I am forced to endure. I told Madame d'Épinay this plainly, before I accepted any at her hands. It is not that I do not like to allow myself to be led like another into bonds that are so dear, when forged by friendship, but when anyone tries to draw the chain too tight, it breaks, and I am free. What has Madame d'Épinay done for me? You know it better than any one, and I can speak freely of it to you. She built for my use a little house at the Hermitage, invited me to take up my quarters there, and I have pleasure in adding that she took pains to make my residence pleasant and secure.

What did I, on my part, do for Madame d'Épinay, at the time when I was ready to retire to my own country, which I was extremely anxious to do, and which I ought to have done? She moved heaven and earth to keep me back. By dint of entreaties, and even intrigue, she overcame my proper and prolonged resistance. My wishes, my inclination, my taste, the disapproval of my friends—all yielded in my heart to the voice of friendship, and I allowed myself to be dragged to the Hermitage. From that moment I always felt that I was in some one else's house, and that single moment, in which I yielded from a desire to oblige, has already caused me the smarts of repentance. My devoted friends, intent upon worrying me to death there, have not given me a moment's peace, and have often made me cry with grief because I was not 500 leagues away from them. Meanwhile, far from abandoning myself to the charms of solitude, the only consolation of an unhappy man struck down by illness, whom everybody tries to torment, I found that I no longer belonged to myself. Madame d'Épinay, being often alone in the country, wanted me to keep her company; this was the reason why she had detained me. Having offered one sacrifice to friendship, I was obliged to offer another to gratitude. It is necessary to be poor and without a servant, to hate constraint, and to have my disposition, to know what it means for me to live in another person's house. However, I have lived two years in hers, in a state of perpetual servitude amidst the most high-flown talk about freedom, waited upon by twenty servants, cleaning my shoes every morning, overwhelmed by cruel indigestion, and sighing without ceasing for my dish of porridge. You know also that it is impossible for me to work at certain hours, that I require solitude, the woods, and meditation; but I am not speaking of lost time; I shall get off with dying of hunger a few months sooner. Meanwhile, consider how much money one hour of a man's life is worth. Compare Madame d'Épinay's kindnesses with the abandonment of my country and two years of slavery, and then tell me which of us is under the greatest obligations to the other.

We now come to the question of usefulness. Madame d'Épinay starts in a nice postchaise, accompanied by her husband, her son's tutor, and five or six servants. She is going to a populous and sociable city, where she will have only too many friends to choose from; she is going to see M. Tronchin, her physician, a wit, a man who is highly esteemed and sought after; she is going into a family of distinction, where she will find everything needed for her health, friendship, and amusement. On the other hand, consider my ailments, my temper, my means, my tastes, my manner of life, which have more influence with me than men and reason itself; tell me, I ask you, in what I can serve Madame d'Épinay during this journey, and what suffering I must endure without ever being of any use to her. Should I be able to endure a postchaise? Can I hope to accomplish so long a journey so speedily without a mishap? Shall I have it stopped every moment that I may get down, or shall I accelerate my torments and my last hour by being obliged to put restraint upon myself? Diderot may think as lightly as he pleases of my life and my health, my condition is well known, the famous surgeons of Paris can attest it, and you may be sure that, with all my sufferings, I am scarcely less weary than others at finding that I live so long. Madame d'Épinay would have to expect continual unpleasantness, a gloomy spectacle, and perhaps some misfortunes on the journey. She knows perfectly well that, in such a case, I would rather go and breathe my last secretly in the corner of a thicket than cause the least expense or detain a servant; and I know her good heart too well not to feel how painful it would be for her to leave me in such a state. I might follow the carriage on foot as Diderot wishes; but the mud, the rain, and the snow would greatly hinder me at this time of the year. However fast I might run, how could I get over twenty-five leagues a day; and if I were to let the chaise go on ahead, of what use should I be to anyone inside it? On my arrival at Geneva, I shall spend the days shut up with Madame d'Épinay; but, however eager I may be to amuse her, it is unavoidable that a life so stay-at-home and contrary to my temperament would end in ruining my health, or, at any rate, plunge me into a state of melancholy which I should be unable to control.

Whatever he may do, one sick person is hardly suitable to look after another, and he who accepts no attentions when he is suffering, is free from the obligation of rendering them at the expense of his health. When we are alone and in a contented frame of mind, Madame d'Épinay does not speak; neither do I. How will it be when I am sad and constrained? I do not see much amusement for her under these circumstances. If she is astonished at Geneva, I shall be much more so, for with money one can be comfortable anywhere; but the poor man has no home. My acquaintances there may not suit her; those which she will make there will suit me still less. I shall have duties to fulfil which will take me away from her, or I shall certainly be asked what urgent necessity causes me to neglect them and keeps me continually in her house. If I were better dressed I might pass for her footman. What then! an unhappy man worn out by illness, with scarcely any shoes to his feet, without clothes, without money, without resources, who only asks his dear friends to leave him unhappy—but free,—how could such a man be necessary to Madame d'Épinay, surrounded by all the conveniences of life, who is dragging ten persons after her? Oh, wealth! worthless and contemptible wealth! if one who is in thy bosom cannot do without the poor, then am I happier than those who possess thee, for I can do without them!

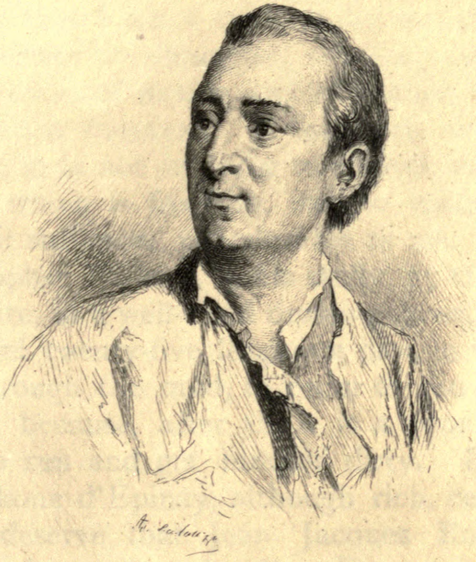
It will be said that she loves me; that it is her friend that she needs. Ah, how well I know the meanings of this word friendship! It is a fine-sounding name which frequently serves as the wages of servitude; but, where servitude begins, friendship ends immediately. I shall always love to serve my friend, provided he is as poor as myself; if he is richer, let us both be free, or let *him* serve *me*, for his bread is already earned, and he has more time to devote to his pleasures.

It only remains for me to say a few words to you about myself. If there are obligations which summon me to follow Madame d'Épinay, are there not others, even more indispensable, which keep me back? and is Madame d'Épinay the only person on earth to whom I owe anything? You may rest assured that as soon as I should have started, Diderot, who so disapproves of my remaining, would disapprove far more strongly of my going, and, in truth, with far more reason. He will say: he is accompanying a woman who is rich and provided with an ample escort, who has not the least need of him, and to whom, after all, he owes little, leaving here, in poverty and loneliness, persons who have spent their lives in his service, and whom his departure has driven to despair. If I allow my expenses to be paid by Madame d'Épinay, Diderot will also make this out to be a fresh obligation which will keep me in bonds for the remainder of my days. If I ever venture to follow my own inclination for a moment, it will be said: Look at that ungrateful fellow; she was kind enough to take him to his native place, and then he left her. Anything that I can do to pay my debts to her will only increase the gratitude which I shall owe her. So fine a thing is it to be rich, for exercising authority and metamorphosing into benefits the chains with which we are fast bound! If, as I ought to do, I pay part of the expenses, where am I to get together so much money at such short notice? To whom can I sell the few books and belongings which remain to me? It is no longer a question of wrapping myself up all the winter in an old dressing-gown. All my clothes are worn out; it wants time to mend them, or else I must buy new ones; but, when anyone has ten spare suits, he hardly thinks of that. During this journey, the duration of which I do not know, I shall leave an establishment here which I must keep up. If I leave these women at the Hermitage, I must, in addition to the gardener's wages, pay a man to look after them, for it would be inhumanity to leave them alone in the middle of the forest. If I take them to Paris, they will want lodgings; and what will become of the furniture and papers that I leave here? I want some money in my pocket; for what is implied by having one's expenses paid in another person's house, where everything always goes smoothly, provided the masters are well served? It implies spending much more than at home, to be annoyed throughout the day, to be without everything one wants, to do nothing that one wishes, and, afterwards, to find oneself under an obligation to those at whose house one has wasted one's money. Add to this the indolence of an idle invalid, accustomed to let things take their course and to lose nothing, to find all he wants for his conveniences ready to his hand without being obliged to ask for it, and whose dress, means, and taciturnity all tend to insure his being neglected. If the journey is long and my money exhausted; if my shoes wear out and my stockings become full of holes; if I have to get my linen washed, to get shaved, and have my wig seen to, etc. etc., it is melancholy to be without a farthing; and, if I have to ask Madame d'Épinay for money as I want it, my mind is made up, let her look after her properties; for, for my part, I declare to you that I would rather be a thief than a beggar.

I think I can see the reason of all the curious obligations which are imposed upon me; it is that

DIDEROT

ETCHED BY LALAUZE


Ad. Lalauze sc.

all those with whom I associate always judge me in accordance with their own position, not mine, and they want a man who has nothing to live as if he had a regular income of 6,000 livres, and plenty of leisure into the bargain.

No one knows how to put himself in my place, nor will see that I am a creature by myself, who possesses neither the character, nor the principles, nor the resources of others, and who must not be judged by their standard. If they take notice of my poverty, it is not in order to respect its compensation, which is freedom, but to render the weight of it still more unendurable to me. Thus the philosopher Diderot, in his study, by the side of a good fire, in a well-lined dressing-gown, wants me to travel twenty-five leagues a day, in winter, on foot, through the mud, in order to run after a postchaise, because, after all, it is a poor man's business to run and get himself dirty. But, in truth, Madame d'Épinay, although rich, certainly does not deserve that Jean Jacques Rousseau should offer her such an insult. Do not imagine that Diderot, whatever he may say, if he could not endure the chaise, would ever in his life run after anyone. However, there would at least be this difference, that he would have good stockings as thick as cloth, stout shoes, and a good night-gown; he would have had a good supper the night before, and have warmed himself well before starting, which makes a man better able to run than another who has no money to pay for supper, furs, or firewood. On my honour, if philosophy does not help to draw these distinctions, I do not exactly see what it is good for.

Weigh my arguments, my dear friend, and tell me what I ought to do. I wish to do my duty, but, considering the condition I am in, what more can any one venture to demand? If you think that I ought to go, let Madame d'Épinay know beforehand; then send me a messenger, and you may rest assured that, the moment I receive your reply, I will set out for Paris immediately, without the slightest hesitation.

As for my staying at the Hermitage, I feel that I ought not to remain there any longer, even if I continue to pay the gardener, for that is not a sufficient rent, but I also think that I owe it to Madame d'Épinay not to leave the Hermitage with an appearance of discontent, which would lead people to imagine that we had quarrelled. I confess that it would be hard for me to change my quarters at this time of the year, which has already given me cruel warning of its approach; it will be better to wait till spring, when it will seem more natural for me to leave, and when I am resolved to look for some retreat unknown to all those barbarous tyrants called friends.

From M. Grimm *to* M. Diderot.

Saturday, the 5th.

Here, my friend, read and learn at last to know the man. You will find enclosed a morsel of eloquence, which Rousseau addressed to me before

Madame d'Épinay's departure. I had previously avoided replying to it directly, as I felt that what I had to say to him would necessarily cause a rupture and a scandal; but to-day he has forced me to do so, by urging me to answer him; and one must not shuffle with a man of this character. I shall take care not to communicate his letter to Madame d'Épinay; I should be afraid that, in her present state of health, such monstrous ingratitude would produce too violent an effect upon her; but I shall not conceal from her that she need have no more scruples in dealing with such a rascal. I also forward you a copy of the second answer which I wrote and have just sent to him by messenger. I am going to see about your business; I will not close my letter until I return home this evening, and I will let you know the result of my visit. Good-bye! my dear Diderot. Good God! what men does the world call philosophers!

M. GRIMM'S *answer to* M. ROUSSEAU.

Saturday, the 5th.

I have done my utmost to avoid replying definitely to the horrible apology which you have addressed to me. You press me to do so; henceforth I shall only think of my duty to myself and my friends, whom you insult.

I never thought that you ought to have accompanied Madame d'Épinay to Geneva; even if your first impulse had been to offer her your company, it would have been her duty to refuse your offer, and to remind you of what you owe to your position, your health, and the women whom you have dragged into your retreat; that is my opinion. You did not feel that impulse, and I was not at all offended. It is true that, having learnt, on my return from the campaign, that, in spite of all my remonstrances, you wanted to start for Geneva some time ago, I was no longer astonished at my friends' surprise at finding you remain, when you had so congenial and honourable an opportunity of going. At that time I was not familiar with your monstrous system; it has made me shudder with indignation; it reveals such hateful principles, such blackness and duplicity. . . . You dare to speak to me of your slavery, to me who, for more than two years, have been the daily witness of all the proofs of the most tender and generous friendship which this woman has given you. If I were able to pardon you, I should think myself unworthy to have a friend. I will never see you again in my life, and I shall think myself happy if I can banish from my mind the memory of your behaviour. I ask you to forget me, and not to disturb me any more. If you are not touched by the justice of this request, remember that I have in my hands your letter, which will justify, in the opinion of all honourable people, the way in which I have acted.

ROUSSEAU'S *reply to* M. GRIMM.

I refused to listen to my well-founded distrust. At last I know you, when it is too late. So that is the letter which you have meditated upon at your leisure; I send it back to you, it is not for me. You may show mine to the whole world, and hate me without concealment; it will be one falsehood less on your part.

Note from M. Grimm *to* M. Diderot.

I have hurried to no purpose; the woodcuts are not ready, and I am no further advanced than when I left my house. The man whom it was most important that I should see has gone into the country, and will not return until to-morrow. But keep on at your work, my friend; go your way and I will see after the rest.

Rousseau has sent me back my letter with a note, which I send you. Really, this man's impudence amazes me. In what a man had Madame d'Épinay reposed her confidence! I also send you a letter which he wrote to her before her departure, and which she has left with me. I am going to finish reading your MS., in order to calm my mind. I have had no news of our traveller for two days; it worries me. I have only heard about the first day's journey, the fatigue of which she endured tolerably well. We must hope that the remainder of her journey will pass comfortably; but I feel uneasy about it, and you know whether I am inclined to believe in presentiments.

From M. Grimm *to* Madame d'Épinay.

You cannot believe, my dear friend, how touched I was by the few lines you wrote me before leaving Paris; it did me much good, since it restored to me the power of shedding tears. After having made the sacrifices which the preservation of your health requires, let me be permitted to think a little about myself. My present loneliness, in which I shall spend the winter, grieves me sorely; my only resource will be your letters and the news you send me in regard to your health. I am quite right to tell you that you must enjoy the present without feeling alarm about the future beyond what prudence requires. If we could have foreseen that we should have been obliged to separate after the campaign, we should neither of us have been able to endure this misfortune; now that it has come, we must submit. I am very sad and very melancholy, overwhelmed by grief. You must forgive the weakness of the first moment.

Do not use the words, "my melancholy condition" again; this expression contains a terrible and sinister meaning to me. You ought never to be melancholy, since you are so tenderly loved, and possess friends; the honesty, uprightness, and sincerity of your character will always prevent your lot from being a melancholy one. If you preserve these blessings, you will always, in all circumstances of your life, have peace and reasons for consolation. If your health is restored, if your affairs are in good order, if the evillydisposed are away from you, what more do you want in order to be happy and peaceful? You are well on the way, and your journey should take you safely into port, my dearest friend. I conjure you to sacrifice everything to your health, to devote yourself every day to this object, and not to bring to bear upon it that slight stamp of thoughtlessness which is part of your character. If you succeed, I shall have nothing further to desire, the rest will be my business; my affection and the confidence which exists between us will spare you all the imprudences to which your excessive kindness and feeling of security render you liable. Your first resolutions are admirable, but you do not always carry them out; and, in order to restore health that is as feeble as yours, it is necessary to exercise the utmost strictness and consistency in your manner of living. You see, my friend, that I am attempting to beguile my sorrow by mapping out for myself a happy and peaceful future. You would not believe how distasteful Paris is to me, and how I long for the days we are to spend together in the country. How happy I am that you are fond of solitude! The melancholy discoveries that I have made in regard to mankind render it more precious to me every day.

I spent the day of your departure alternately with your mother and child. Alas! what else could I have done? You may trust to me; the care which I shall take of them will be my dearest and most delightful occupation during your absence. Do not draw alarming pictures of your mother's condition; her health is better than it has ever been, and I hope that I shall have no bad news to send you respecting her. I expect to hear from you this evening; I will wait before I close my letter, which I shall send addressed to M. Tronchin, so that you may find it on your arrival. Good-bye! my dear friend; alas! yes, good-bye, for you are far away. When I wrote to you a month ago, I did not expect to be so soon in correspondence with you.

The following day.

I received a letter from M. d'Épinay yesterday evening; it has been a great consolation. I hope after this for a continuation of good news. I shall not hear to-day, but I expect news to-morrow. I spent the evening with your mother, who is well, and I assure you that she bears up better than I had ventured to hope. I wish I were equally courageous; I am so frightened by my loneliness that I have not the courage to do anything. I spend three or four hours in my easy chair dreaming of you; I cannot call it thinking. This frame of mind will not last, but I feel that I require good news of your restoration to health at Geneva before I can get rid of it. Up to the present moment I prefer to continue in my lethargy; I feel that my awakening will not be exempt from uneasiness; arrive, then, my dear friend, that you may be able to return. I could have wished at least that to-morrow were over; then I might think that all your difficulties were surmounted. Your mother said to me yesterday: "Alas! poor Emilie is perhaps dying of fright; she is perhaps getting out of the chaise needlessly, tiring herself, and exposing herself to the cold without any reason." Such reflections would kill us if we gave ourselves up to them.

I have not yet sufficiently recovered from the state of astonishment into which your departure has thrown me to be able to talk with you. I am even denied the happiness of shedding tears. Ah! my dear and beloved friend, if we ever see each other again, who would have the courage to separate us?

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* MADAME D'ESCLAVELLES.

Tournus.

My dear mother, I wish to inform you myself that I am standing the journey far better than I had hoped; I am wonderfully well, and my only ailment is a little fatigue and weariness. We had a very short day yesterday. M. d'Épinay does nothing but get in and out at every stage, which delays us considerably. I intend to finish my journey, and to be in a fit state to return to you with as little delay as possible. My most affectionate respects to you, my dear mamma. I embrace my little daughter.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

Mont-Luel.

Make yourself easy, my dear friend; I do not think that I have ever felt so well; I have more strength and courage than I had ventured to hope for. There is nothing like necessity; it doubles the faculties which we feel we possess. A thousand kind regards to our friends, and to you so many, ever so many compliments, and all the etc. etc. of the Marquis du Croismare.

From M. GRIMM *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

I have received a letter from Mont-Luel, which has calmed me a little. In Heaven's name, write to me as soon as you arrive, for I shall not be easy until I see your handwriting, addressed from Geneva. I am terribly angry with M. d'Épinay; it is he who has delayed and fatigued you for nothing. Consider, my dear friend, that there are disagreeables everywhere, and that it is for you to avoid them; they say that M. Tronchin is absent-minded, and that he will not think of warning you against those of Geneva. I have already heard of a north wind, which makes me mad; you must take precautions against it. I could write you four pages about it, but I hope that I shall have the courage to resist the temptation; and, to avoid yielding to it, I will try and talk to you about something else.

You must know then that, a few days before your departure, I received a letter from Rousseau, in defence of his reluctance to accompany you; it is the height of folly and wickedness; that is why I did not wish to let you read it at the moment of our separation. I answered him as he deserved, and as you ought to have done. He sent me back my letter, so that there is an open and pronounced rupture between us. I seized the opportunity to unmask him to Diderot. I also sent him the letter which he wrote to you the day you left. These documents have at least served the purpose of justifying you in part, and Rousseau himself, without intending it, has done the rest. It seems that he intends to leave the Hermitage; and it is probable that he is preparing for your benefit a fine manifesto, in order to justify himself. My advice is that you should leave him alone, and make no answer; but circumstances will be a better guide for you than myself. All that I desire is, that he shall torment my friends no longer; then he can do what he likes; besides, you are not the only one who has reason to complain of him. The man is not only wicked, but he has certainly lost his senses. I do not know whether you can remember that you were told this autumn that Diderot had advised him to write to M. de Saint-Lambert, for the following reason. Rousseau had sent for Diderot to the Hermitage. The latter went there and found him in a deplorable condition. He confessed, in fact, that he felt the most violent passion for the Comtesse d'Houdetot, but that, as his principles forbade him to yield to it, even if she listened to him, he was sufficiently sure of himself not to fear any dishonourable result of his affection. "The reason of my torture," he said, "which rends my heart, is that the Marquis de Saint-Lambert so strongly suspects my passion, that he is jealous of me—of me, who am his friend, and torments the Comtesse about me, to the extent of believing that she shares my feelings, whereas I have never permitted myself to disclose them to her; she is ignorant, and always will be ignorant, of them. It is Madame d'Épinay," he added, "who has created trouble between us, by her inexhaustible coquetry and intrigues."

"I can see only one honourable course," replied Diderot: "you must write to the Marquis and confess your passion, protest to him that the Comtesse knows nothing of it, justify her in his sight, and show him how firmly resolved you are to stifle the feelings which have sprung up in your heart in spite of yourself."

This advice threw Rousseau into transports of gratitude. He swore to follow it, and, some days later, he informed Diderot that he had done so, that his letter was sent off, and that his heart felt safe again.

In fact, for a week he ceased to see the Comtesse, congratulated himself on the victory he had gained over himself, and yet has not failed, subsequently, to seize every opportunity of seeing her when she could not avoid him.

Some days after you left, Diderot met Saint-Lambert at the Baron d'Holbach's. They talked about Rousseau. The Marquis let fall a few expressions of contempt. Diderot, who knows him to be generous and honourable, was astonished at his injustice, and took him aside to ask him the reason of it. The Marquis appeared desirous of avoiding an explanation. Diderot, with his usual frankness, at last told him that Rousseau, after the letter which he had written to him, had a right to expect kinder treatment. "What letter are you talking about?" replied the Marquis. "I have only received one, the only possible answer to which is a good thrashing." The philosopher was dumbfounded. They entered into an explanation, and at last succeeded in coming to an understanding. In a word, the Marquis informed Diderot that the letter only contained a long lecture upon the nature of the connection between Saint-Lambert and the Comtesse d'Houdetot, in which he was abused and described as a villain, who abused the confidence reposed in him by the Comte d'Houdetot. You will observe that the Comtesse has in her hands more than twenty letters from Rousseau, some more impassioned than others, which she has communicated to Saint-Lambert, while Rousseau had sworn to Diderot that he would die sooner than declare his passion to the Comtesse. The philosopher, utterly stunned by this discovery, wrote on the following day to Rousseau to reproach him for having tricked him; he did not reply, which made Diderot resolve to call upon him yesterday in order to have an explanation with him. On his return, in the evening, he wrote me the letter of which I send you a copy, for it is admirable and worth preservation. This morning he came to see me, and recounted to me the details of his visit. Rousseau was alone at the bottom of his garden; as soon as he perceived Diderot, he cried to him in a voice of thunder and with a face aflame: "What do you want here?" "I come to know," replied the philosopher, "whether you are mad or a villain." "You have known me for fifteen years," answered Rousseau; "you know that I am not a villain, and I will prove to you that I am not mad; follow me." He immediately took Diderot into his study, opened a box filled with papers, and pulled out about twenty letters, which he seemed, however, to select from amongst the other papers. "Here," said he, "these are some letters from the Comtesse; take any of them at random, and read my justification." In the first letter upon which Diderot alighted, he read, in plain terms, the most bitter reproaches against Rousseau from the Comtesse for abusing her confidence, in order to alarm her in regard to her connection with the Marquis, while he was not ashamed to employ snares, trickery, and the most cunning sophistries in order to lead her astray. "Ah!" cried Diderot, "there is no doubt about it; you must be mad to have exposed yourself to the risk of letting me read this; read it yourself; it is plain enough." Rousseau grew pale, stammered, and then burst into an inconceivable passion, violently attacked the indiscreet zeal of friends, and refused to admit that he was wrong. Can you imagine anything comparable to such folly? It is to the indignation aroused in Diderot that I owe the knowledge of all these details. I am sure that he would never have allowed himself to speak of them if he had not found himself obliged to justify himself. At the present time, Rousseau considers it a crime on his part to have had an explanation with the Marquis, and openly accuses him of having revealed his secret. This is very clumsy on his part, for it obliges Diderot to divulge it to avoid being looked upon as a traitor. Such is the man who drew up a code of friendship; he needs pardon all day long, and he passes over nothing in others. I do not want to think any more about him.

You may be sure that you are not forgotten at the Baron d'Holbach's; however, they do not like to speak too much about you, for fear of grieving me; they do not know that such sorrow is delightful. Adieu, my dear, my precious friend! I have heard from my brother to-day; he informs me that proposals have been made to him on my behalf from the court of Saxe-Gotha. You can guess what a hurry I am in to leave France.

From M. DIDEROT *to* M. GRIMM.

The 5th, evening.

The man is a lunatic. I have seen and reproached him with the enormity of his conduct, with all the vigour inspired by honourable feeling, and a kind of interest which still remains at the bottom of the heart of a friend who has been long devoted to him; the tears shed at Madame d'Épinay's feet, at the very moment when he was bringing the gravest charges against her to me; the hateful apology which he has sent to you, and in which there was not a single one of the arguments which he might have used; the projected letter to Saint-Lambert, which was to calm him in regard to the feelings for which he reproached himself, and in which, far from confessing a passion which had arisen in his heart in spite of himself, he excuses himself for having alarmed Madame d'Houdetot in regard to her own. What more do I know? I am not satisfied with his replies; I have not had the courage to let him see it; I have preferred to leave him the miserable consolation of believing that he has deceived me. Let him live! He has introduced into his defence an impassioned coldness which has grieved me. I am afraid that he is utterly hardened.

Adieu! my friend; let us be, and continue to be, honourable people; the condition of those who have ceased to be so alarms me. Adieu! my friend; I embrace you tenderly. I fling myself into your arms like a man who is frightened. I have vainly attempted to write some poetry, but this man's face keeps returning to me in the midst of my work. He troubles me, and I feel as if I had near me one who is damned. He is damned; of that I am certain. Adieu! my friend. Grimm, that is the effect I should produce upon you, if I were ever to behave like a rascal; in truth, I would rather be dead. Perhaps there is but litttle common-sense in what I am writing to you, but I declare to you that I have never felt so troubled in my heart as now.

Oh, my friend, what a sight is a wicked man tormented by his conscience! Tear up and burn this paper; let it never come under your eyes again. May I never see that man again; he would make me believe in the devil and hell. If I am ever obliged to return to his house, I am sure that I shall shudder all the way; I was in a fever on my way back. I regret that I did not let him see the horror with which he inspired me, and I can only become reconciled to myself by the reflection that you, with all your firmness, would not have been able to do so if you had been in my place. I believe he would have killed me. His cries could be heard to the end of the garden; and I saw him! Adieu! my friend; I will come and see you to-morrow. I will go in search of an honest man at whose side I can sit, who will console me and drive from my heart something infernal which has fastened on it and torments it. The poets have done well to place a vast interval between heaven and hell. In truth, my hand trembles.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

Geneva, the 12th.

At last I am safe in port, my dear friend; but I do not yet know where I am, and I can tell you nothing of all that I should like. M. de Jully came to meet us and overwhelmed me with friendliness. The apartments which he has chosen for me are very pretty, but small; and I shall be uneasy until M. d'Épinay leaves, as I believe he intends to do at the end of this week. He lives in a small room which can only be reached through mine; he is always there, and you know what a whim of mine it is, not to be able even to address a letter when I know that there are people about me. I was conscious of a strange sinking at my heart when I entered Geneva. It seems to me that the place where I have come in search of health ought to have created quite a different impression upon me. I have never been able to bring myself to look upon it as anything but the place of exile, which was destined to separate me from you for at least six months. Here I am, with my life assured, in the hands of a man who astonishes me by the care and interest which he bestows upon me. His touching words at last brought tears into my eyes; I had not been able to shed one since my departure from Paris.

The post has arrived to-day, but I have heard from nobody. If you were waiting to hear of my arrival before writing to me, I shall be greatly to be pitied, for letters take five days to come, and the post only arrives and leaves three times a week. I have so many things to tell you, and so little strength to write as yet. I should like to say everything at once, and I end by saying nothing. My saviour has already examined me carefully, and questioned me, and the result of his examination is, that my cure is certain, but will perhaps be protracted; he says that he will not be able to pronounce a definite opinion for some time.

I found a letter from my *concierge*, informing me that Rousseau has sent him a message to fetch the furniture from the Hermitage, because he is going to leave it. I simply answered: If M. Rousseau leaves the Hermitage, remove the furniture the day after he has gone, not before. Go and see M. Grimm; you will hear from him what is going to become of Madame and Mademoiselle le Vasseur, and, if they are in need of anything that belongs to me, you will leave them what M. Grimm tells you to give them. You will take what remains to my mother's house.

Let me know what becomes of these women; I beg you will not suffer them to want. I will reimburse you; and I shall approve of all you do, especially for old Madame le Vasseur. My oracle declares that I must not write much or apply myself to anything closely.

The following day.

I was interrupted yesterday by visits. I will tell you another time about all my visitors. I beg you will try never to leave me two posts without a letter either from you, or my mother, or Pauline. The cruel thing is, that the snow nearly always delays the post during the winter. What a country is that in which my peace of mind depends upon the weather! How have I been able to separate from you? What folly to pretend to be cured, when I have left my happiness, my tranquillity, and the most precious part of myself more than a hundred leagues behind me! Oh! why did you not think sooner of accompanying me? What a difference it would have made! But the delight of having you near me would soon have been over, and only the regret at our separation would have remained. My entire consolation will be in your letters. You will not let me be without it, my dear friend, will you? Here is one. I have read it, and I have added a few words before mine leaves.

Oh, my friend, what a monster is this Rousseau! I am astounded at him. Diderot's letter is admirable. The post is just leaving. I have only time to ask you to let my mother know how I am; I will write to her by the next post. I am very well; I slept splendidly last night.

I forgot to tell you that M. de Voltaire came to meet me. He wanted to keep us to dinner; but, although I should have been very happy to stay, I was in a hurry to rest myself and to reach my destination.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

My dear friend, I expected to spend my morning with you; but I have been deprived to-day of this unique and delightful consolation. M. d'Épinay is just starting, and so is the post. I am only writing to my mother, and just these few lines to you, to say that I am quite well, and that my preserver, who is adorable, keeps saying the same thing to me over and over again, and scolding me almost as much as you do. He is taking me to-day, for the first time, to Voltaire's house. I did not want to be in too great a hurry to yield to the continued entreaties of him and his niece. He has written the nicest notes in the world to me nearly every day; I replied verbally; I contented myself with sending my husband, my son, and M. Linant to him; and I remained quietly at home. At last I am going there; but I long to be back in order to talk freely with you. Well! they tell me that the post has left, and my letter is delayed four days! If you are going to be uneasy, I shall be miserable. They are waiting for me. Good-bye, then, till the evening.

The evening.

It is late. However, I must say a few words to you; I cannot go to bed without that. That is the first moment when I can breathe and tell you without restraint that I cannot console myself for my separation from you.

I have just come from Voltaire's. I am very pleased with the great man; he has overwhelmed me with civility. It is not his fault that we have returned this evening; he wanted to keep us. I have borne up very well during the day, so make your mind easy. Good-bye till to-morrow.

The next day.

What is this letter from Rousseau to D'Alembert, in which, according to what Voltaire has heard, he accuses a friend of the most arrant treachery? It is said that his remarks point unmistakably to Diderot. What does this fresh horror imply? What is the foundation for it? and what can it mean? Can it refer to what you have written to me in regard to Saint-Lambert?

My oracle has questioned me closely, in order to find out what I think about the hermit. I was as reserved as I was obliged to be; but, at last, I was compelled to speak more frankly on learning what I am going to tell you. "Will you be good enough," he said to me yesterday, "to explain a letter from him, in which he speaks of you, and which I do not understand?"

Here is the paragraph, word for word, which I have copied in order to send to you:

"Madame d'Épinay has decided to make her journey, her body and soul need it; she has entire confidence in you. As for the physical assistance which she expects from it, you will find her tractable; not so in regard to her principles; she holds to those of your scented philosophers, and I doubt whether you will be able to make her give them up. It is inconceivable that a woman of such intelligence, who has such affection for virtue, and takes pleasure in practising it, even to the extent of sacrificing her happiness without hesitation, when her duty demands it, should be continually attributing to her reason the errors and caprices of her inclinations. Yes, I am convinced that there is no man, however honourable, who, if he always followed the dictates of his heart, would not soon become the greatest of villains. I am talking to you about all this because, when I speak of her, I think I am speaking to her . . . ."

I replied to my preserver that I did not understand the letter at all, but that the conclusion, obscure though it was, shocked me greatly. He eagerly rejoined: "Madame, only a monster could think and write thus of a friend who was a woman: distrust him. I myself have not answered his letter, and I will never do so." Then I told my preserver all about myself and the last quarrel that I had with this man; he was indignant, but not surprised at it. He showed me a letter which a certain M. N***, a Protestant minister, received from Diderot yesterday. I asked permission to take a copy of it, which I send to you; it was worth the trouble. This M. N * * * had written to him about Rousseau, and asked him whom he understood to be accused in the work of which Voltaire has spoken to me. He also complimented him upon the portion of the History of Philosophy which had appeared, and encouraged him to continue it. Diderot's reply appears to me admirable; I beg you, my friend, to send me all his works that you can get; four lines written by this man make me think and occupy me more than a complete work of our pretended wits.

My preserver has acquainted me with the manners of the country in general and the character of those with whom he recommends me to become friendly; it has been very kind of him to take this trouble, for I declare to you that

M. de Jully would not have been in a position to tell me a word about it. During the five months that he has been here, it has not occurred to him that there was anything to see or investigate in a foreign country. Does not that show a clever diplomatist? That comes of not knowing how to put people in the right place. He would make an admirable *Intendant des menus*,[1] but there are few other places that would suit him. In other respects he shows me great kindness, and takes special care of me.

Tronchin has already introduced several people to me, amongst others his cousin, M. Tronchin de la Boissière, Counsellor of State, who seems to me a man of resource; he is rather an elderly man, but witty, talented and tasteful, a rare thing here; he is by no means pedantic, although that is the fault of his nation. I have also received calls from several of my compatriots, who are here on a passing visit—the President of * * * and his wife, and the Abbé de C * * *. The President is a wearisome and troublesome fool. His wife is, literally, like N * * * 's cousin, whom you know; she is just as great a gossip, has the same figure, and the same manners, combined with a pleasant face and a devoutness which comes to nothing. The Abbé appears amiable, but he is a mere child. My oracle has publicly forbidden me to visit or dine out; he has thereby put me at my ease.

He proposes to map out my time as follows:

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[1] *Intendant des menus (plaisirs):* Officials under the ancient monarchy charged with the superintendence of the court amusements.

I am to have my mornings to myself, and receive no one but him; I am to dine *en famille*, and in the afternoon receive visitors from seven to eight o'clock. It is not customary to shut one's doors here, except in the case of illness. Visits begin at two o'clock and end at six—the hour when people meet. Three times a week I shall have two or three people to supper, and I shall take no meals away from home except with my preserver or M. de Voltaire. I do not tell you anything about my diet, my ailments, or my remedies. M. Linant is sending a detailed account of them to my mother, to which I refer you. That is enough for this morning, my dear friend. The post arrives to-day, and leaves again to-morrow. I will wait until it arrives before closing this letter. Good-bye!

8 *p.m.*

Oh! how rich I am to-day! I have received letters from everybody, and two from you, my dear friend; but it is too late to answer them to-night. I have had visitors all day. Amongst these letters there is one from Rousseau, which is a formal adieu, and is of no importance. I send it to you, together with a copy of my reply. Good night!

From M. DIDEROT *to* MONSIEUR N***.

Pressure of work, trouble, annoyance, ill-health: such, Monsieur, during the last two months that I have owed you an answer, are the reasons that have made me say every day: "To-morrow, to-morrow." But, although my negligence is in-excusable, you will forgive me—you will imitate Him who receives us whenever we return to Him, and never said: "It is too late."

I have been more touched by your praises than I can express. How could I have failed to be so? They were the praises of a man charged by his profession and worthy by his talents to preach virtue to his fellows. In expressing approval of my works, and encouraging me to continue them, he seemed to associate me with his ministry. I thought this to myself for a moment, and I felt vain and excited; I should have been ready to undertake even the life of Socrates,[1] in spite of my incompetence for the task, which you made me forget. You see how seductive is the praise of an honourable man. Although I soon recovered myself and recognised how far the theme was beyond my powers, I have not altogether abandoned it; I intend to wait. It is with this article that I should like to say farewell to literature. Should I ever write it, it will be preceded by a discourse, the object of which will not seem to you either less important or less difficult of fulfilment—namely, to convince mankind that, all things duly considered, they have nothing better to do in the world than to practise virtue.

I have already thought of it, but have not yet found anything to satisfy me; I tremble when it occurs to me that, if virtue should not emerge triumphantly from the comparison, the result would be almost an apology for vice. In other respects, the task appears to me so great and noble, that I would willingly summon all honourable persons to my assistance. How puerile and misplaced would vanity be on an occasion when it was a question of confounding the wicked and reducing him to silence! If I were influential and a bachelor, I would propose the following subject for a prize after my death: I would leave all my property to the man who would definitely settle this question, to the satisfaction of a city such as yours. I have said "after my death," but why not "during my lifetime?"—I who esteem virtue so highly that I would willingly give all I possess to reach the moment when I could live as innocently as when I was born, or to arrive at my last moments with forgetfulness of the faults which I have committed and the consciousness of not having increased their number. And where is the wretch who is sufficiently in love with his gold to refuse this exchange? Where is the father who would not accept it with delight for his child? Where is the man who, having lived till the age of forty-five without reproach, would not rather die a thousand times than lose so precious a privilege by the slightest falsehood? Ah! Monsieur, stretch such a man upon the straw in the depths of a dungeon, load him with chains, inflict upon him every kind of torture, you will perhaps draw groans from him, but you will never prevent him from being what he loves the best; deprive him of everything, put him to death at the corner of a street with his back against a post, and you will not prevent him from dying content.

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[1] Diderot was engaged upon the "History of Ancient Philosophy" for the Encyclopaedia.

There is, then, nothing in the world to which virtue is not preferable, and if it does not appear to us to be so, we are corrupt and have not enough of it left in us to appreciate its value. I am not writing a letter to you, but I am talking to you as I formerly used to talk to this man who has buried himself in the depths of a forest where his heart has become soured and his manners perverted. How I pity him! Consider that I loved him, that I remember him, that I see him alone, between guilt and remorse, with deep waters beside him. He will often torment my thoughts; our common friends have judged between us. I have kept them all; he has not one left.

It is a monstrous action publicly to accuse an old friend, even when he is guilty; but what name can one give to such an action if it happens that the friend is innocent? and, again, what name would it deserve, if the accuser, in the bottom of his heart, confessed the innocence of the man whom he ventures to accuse?

I am afraid, Monsieur, that your fellow-countryman quarrelled with me because he could no longer endure my presence. He had taught me for two years to pardon private injuries, but this is a public one, and I know no remedy for that. I have not read his last work. I have been told that it is of a religious turn; if that is the case I will keep it till the last.

From ROUSSEAU *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

If one could die of grief, I should not now be alive, but at last I have made up my mind. All friendship between us is at an end, Madame; but even that which no longer exists still keeps its rights, which I know how to respect. I have not forgotten your kindnesses to me, and you may count upon receiving from me all the gratitude I can feel for one whom I may no longer love. Any further explanation would be useless. My conscience is my judge; I refer you to yours.

I wanted to leave the Hermitage, and I ought to do so; but my friends declare that I must remain here until spring, and, since they will have it so, I will stay if you consent.

MADAME D'ÉPINAY'S *reply to* M. ROUSSEAU.

December 4th.

After having shown you every possible mark of friendship and sympathy for several years, it only remains for me to pity you. You are very unhappy. I wish that your conscience may be as calm as mine. This might be necessary for your peace of mind for the rest of your life.

Since you wish to leave the Hermitage, and think that you ought to do so, I am surprised that your friends have kept you there. As for myself, I never consult my own friends in regard to my duty, and I have nothing more to say to you about your own.

From M. GRIMM *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

I am delighted with you, my dear friend, with M. Tronchin, with Voltaire, with M. de Jully, with everybody. So there you are at least at Geneva, with the best hopes in the world. You must intoxicate yourself with them, my dear friend, because they will make all your sacrifices and resolutions easy and possible. Your letter was delightful to me. I hope that you are now free and quiet, and that you have already thought of mapping out for yourself a plan of life that is at once agreeable and suitable to your position. I shall hear all about that in good time. But, my dear friend, do not fatigue yourself by informing me of all that the persons around you can tell me; it is the state of your mind that I want to know about; but you must not fatigue yourself. Follow M. Tronchin's instructions to the letter, even though I have to remain without consolation or resources.

What the unhappy Rousseau has just done, in regard to which you ask me to give you an explanation, is the following: He has thundered against Diderot, and openly accused him of having maliciously betrayed his secret and confidence; and that, because he had an explanation with the Marquis de Saint-Lambert in regard to the letter which Rousseau was to write to him. His outcries were so public and indecent, that Saint-Lambert took the trouble to go to the Hermitage to justify Diderot, and to tell Rousseau how the explanation had taken place. He left him convinced that he had destroyed his suspicions, and that he was ready to justify his friend publicly. This was by no means the case; four days later a printed letter by Rousseau appeared, in which he redoubled his charges against Diderot, and branded him as a man without honour or religion. This letter was being printed while he was swearing to the Marquis that it was very pleasant to him to find his friend innocent.

Your reply to his letter is very good; but it is said that Rousseau does not seem in such a hurry to leave your house; for my own part, I think that, after all that has taken place, you cannot allow him to remain there without loss of self-respect.

I will tell you of another piece of folly, not so serious. M. de Margency has quarrelled with the Baron, because the latter took it into his head to declare that a romance which Madame de Verdelin has just written, and which is neither good nor bad, was a very mediocre production. I was hoping that they would make it up. Margency obstinately refuses to return, and the Baron will not go to look for him—does not attempt it. I am sorry for it: I am not fond of trifles. Margency is very pleasant in society, but he will never be a firm friend. This dispute will also separate him from you, and that is to be regretted; however, no attempt must be made to avoid this unpleasantness.

M. de Francueil has been every day to enquire after you; he says that he greatly regrets not having accompanied you. I think you will do well to put a word of thanks in one of your letters, which I may read to him.

We are expecting your husband. We shall all meet at your mother's on the day of his arrival, to learn from him the hopes which your preserver holds out to us. Remember, my dear and beloved friend, that I will believe no one but yourself. Good-bye! you who are so tenderly loved, you whose absence has deprived me of joy, peace, and tranquillity, you whose preservation constitutes the happiness of my life, and will take the place of everything for me.

From M. GRIMM *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

This has been one of the happiest days I could have spent without you. I dined at your mother's with M. d'Épinay, who has arrived in good health; after that, I received your two letters. One thing alone has disturbed me and completely spoilt my satisfaction; namely, the fresh news you have just told me about that monster Rousseau. You cannot believe what an effect such horrible things have upon me; they upset all my machinery, and leave a profound impression. Let us try to efface the recollection of such infamies. We must take upon ourselves the support of old Madame le Vasseur; Rousseau has not turned her out of doors, he is too clever for that; but he treats her in such a manner that she would rather beg her bread in the streets than remain with him. Could she take up her quarters with you? let me hear your ideas upon the subject. Diderot, you, and I will each contribute to her support according to our means.

Well, Margency has not set foot inside the Baron's house again; nothing has been heard of him for more than ten days. I called upon him, he was away; I shall call again to tell him plainly what I think of him. Good heavens! how insipid men are, and how they weary me!

The weather here is lovely, and keeps me in a state of pleasant melancholy. I sometimes think that we shall spend next winter in the country together. Good heavens! what a delightful idea! how happy I should be if it were realised! Bring us back health, and all will be well. Do not be sad, I entreat you; remember that it might delay your cure; try to amuse yourself, and let me know if you succeed.

I certainly wish, my dear friend, that you could at last pay your debts, and even economise during your visit. If M. d'Épinay is capable of reflecting and behaving honourably, he also will take advantage of your absence to clear off the claims against him, but I do not venture to hope this for his own sake and your children's; however, I will try to have a conversation with him, if only to see how he is disposed. It is important that you should so arrange your affairs that you may not suffer any more from his irregularities. Could you not have gone to live at M. de Jully's? did he not make the offer to you? It seems to me that such an arrangement would have been very suitable and far less expensive; perhaps you would even have been better attended to there than by your own servants.

I await your letters with an impatience beyond expression; if you were to send me ten a day I should never have enough of them. Alas! my dear friend, how far distant is the day when I shall see you again! Adieu! my friend, my only blessing; you cannot conceive how much I love you! Alas! they have torn us asunder. How deeply I am to be pitied!

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

I feel terribly sad, I do not know why; however, I am well—no vapours, no weariness. The letters which I have received this morning have intoxicated me with delight; but the more I read them, the more my heart aches: whence comes this presentiment which besets me? I fear, and I feel that I fear for you; but why need I seek for other excuses or reasons for my sadness than our separation? I have received your letters, but they are dated five or six days back; how many things can happen in six days! Let us see whether I shall regain calmness if I talk quietly. What you tell me about Rousseau is incomprehensible; he must certainly be an abominable wretch! I do not wish to dwell much upon the reflections which he arouses in my mind; he casts a gloom over my heart and my imagination. I cannot think, without feeling troubled, of so decided a villain.

In truth, my friend, it is a very curious thing to see how I receive my letters: I am agitated by joy, trouble, and uneasiness. I do not know whether I ought to commence reading them at the beginning or at the end. I am in despair until I come to the part which describes how you and my mother and child are getting on. I feel happier at the second reading; and then, little by little, my illusion ceases, and I find myself again a hundred leagues away from all that is dear to me. So you do not wish me to return without you? Ah! the idea did not occur to you first; I had made up my mind to ask you, but have I had time to say anything to you yet?

The life we lead here suits me very well; I feel that I should be so happy with you that I should find it difficult to give it up. As far as I can judge from the little I have already seen, the manners of the people are somewhat different from ours; they are simple, and though some of the citizens cry "corruption," I am surprised at their purity and innocence. There are many fine political institutions. I have already had an opportunity of examining the Corn Chamber, which always prevents corn from being scarce. The soil can only support 9,000 persons, and there are 24,000 inhabitants. The Corn Chamber is managed by a certain number of permanent officials, and by some members of their Council, which is called the Two Hundred, because it is composed of two hundred burgesses of the city. It is the duty of these directors to get in every year 60,000 sacks of corn from all the places whence it would not naturally be brought to the market, and it is all stored up. The town bakers are obliged to get their supplies from these stores; but bakers' bread is hardly used except for the inns, the common people, and passing visitors. Most private persons who are fairly well off make their bread at home, and they are at liberty, if the product of the soil belonging to each owner is not sufficient for them, to purchase supplies at the public market, which sometimes makes prices go up; then the directors of the Exchange immediately circulate the amount of sacks necessary to restore the equilibrium. The price of bakers' bread is fixed invariably. The expenses of this institution are set down amongst the liabilities of the Republic. The object of the latter is not profit, as it is easy to imagine, but merely to provide for ever against dearth of supplies and its attendant inconveniences.

Since I am on this subject, I must say a word about their hospital, which is a little better managed than our own. The building which is called by this name is not ornamented at all; it is in the healthiest quarter of the town; there is little accommodation in it; it is only used as a storehouse for the registers and the cash. The managers meet there once a week to discuss matters concerning the poor, and there they secretly distribute the assistance required by each poor household, or by those private persons who are compelled to apply for it. Sometimes, however, poor persons belonging to the Republic who are without shelter are admitted there; but this is a rare occurrence, because, owing to the general habits, there are hardly any persons in such a position. As for wandering beggars, they are stopped at the barriers and conducted to the hospital by a sentinel; shelter is given them for a certain definite period, and, according to the distance from the place they wish to go, they are supplied with a sum of money to the amount of a florin (nearly 12 *sous* of our money), and conducted by a sentinel to the gate of the town, that they may continue their journey; if they return before the time or abuse this hospitality, they are imprisoned, and punished or let off according to the nature of their offence. Part of the expense falls upon the Republic, the rest is appropriated from the *rentes*, and yearly collections are made for extraordinary expenses. All the orphan children of citizens without means are brought up at the expense of the hospital, where they are treated, not as paupers, but as citizens more worthy of respect than the rest, in proportion as they are more unfortunate. But to return to myself.

I get up between six and seven; all my mornings are free. At twelve o'clock I go down upon my terrace, and walk in the public garden when the weather permits. Women are at liberty here to go about everywhere on foot by themselves, without lackeys and maids; even foreign ladies would be noticed and followed if they acted differently; this freedom pleases me, and I take advantage of it. I dine at home or at M. Tronchin's at one o'clock; from two till six I usually pay or receive visits; at six o'clock the town is practically dead, and strangers remain in the most perfect solitude, because everyone goes to see his private friends. They all give parties in turn; tea is taken as in England, but refreshments are not limited to this beverage; there is excellent pastry, *café au lait*, chocolate, etc.

The assemblies, which are called "societies," are composed of men and women; young, unmarried girls are rarely admitted; they have their own "societies," to which men and lads are only admitted when one of the girls is going to be married. The amusements of these societies vary according to the age and tastes of those who compose them—play, work, and sometimes music. Play seems the prevailing amusement among the women; and I am surprised at it, for I was told that they are all as well-informed as those whom I have seen, and that is saying a great deal. There are some societies composed entirely of women. In like manner, there are assemblies of men, where women are not admitted; they are called "circles." It is not true that the men do nothing but smoke and get drunk. These "circles" meet in sets of rooms, which a certain number of congenial spirits rent in common. They assemble on such and such a day in the week; eating and drinking goes on; the newspapers are to be found there; the members talk politics *ad nauseam*, and rack their brains with conjectures and discoveries of the views and schemes of potentates; and, when our friends' conjectures are not confirmed by the result, they are equally satisfied with their shrewdness in having unquestionably discovered, not what such a power has done, but what it ought to have done. The truth is that men are the same everywhere, with slight modifications, for I know originals of the same kind at Paris. However, they are, as a rule, more occupied with their own affairs than with those of other people; but, as nearly all the Genevese have their money invested in France, England, and Holland, it is natural enough that they should be intimately concerned in what goes on in those countries. But I have wandered far from what I wanted to tell you, which, if I am not mistaken, was, that at six o'clock I find myself almost alone. Well! this would be the hour when I should begin to live, if I were living here *en famille* and with you.

In other respects, the manners and habits of these people are more touching and satisfactory to see than they are easy to describe. Virtue, honesty, and above all, simplicity, are the basis of their conduct, which, however, is overlaid with a slight varnish of pedantry, which, as far as I can judge, is necessary to them for the maintenance of their simplicity, in which the whole strength of their State consists; nothing is granted except to personal merit, and everything is refused to one who does not possess the public esteem. This, I think, is the reason why the Genevese in general have the reputation of being false. It is hardly possible that a large number of men assembled together should all be virtuous and honourable, but they are all obliged to seem so. There is no doubt that the least germ of virtue is highly valued here, and that the most is made of it. The actions which are the glory of our heroes of virtue in Paris would make a citizen of Geneva blush. No! since I have had an opportunity of examining these people closely, I doubt whether Rousseau will ever come and live amongst them.

I had a very long conversation with M. Tronchin about my health yesterday, and the time he expects my cure to take. Without making a decided statement, I can see that he reckons I shall have to stay here a year. I could not help letting him see the alarm this sentence caused me. Indeed, my dear friend, what would become of me if I were obliged to be so long absent? Ah! I hope this is not the last word my oracle will have to say.

I have spent another day at Voltaire's. I was received with the regard, respect, and attention which I am inclined to believe I deserve, but to which I am as yet hardly accustomed. He asked me much about you, Diderot, and all our friends. He did his utmost to be amiable, and it is not difficult for him to succeed in that. In spite of that, at first sight, I think I would rather live with M. Diderot, who, by-the-way, has not the reputation here that he deserves. Would you believe that, when the Encyclopaedia is in question, people can talk only of D'Alembert? I told the truth about it, and said what I felt bound to say. I only stated the truth; but, if I had lied, I should have been believed just the same; when I speak, there are as many eyes and mouths open as ears; this is quite new to me and makes me laugh.

Voltaire's niece would make you die with laughing; she is a fat little woman, as round as a ball, about fifty years of age, such a woman as I have never see before; ugly and good, untruthful without meaning it and without malice; she has no intellect, and yet seems to have some; she exclaims loudly, is very positive, dabbles in politics, writes verses, argues rationally and irrationally; and all without too great pretentiousness, and, above all, without offending anyone; over the whole she has a thin varnish of masculine love, which shows through the restraint which she has imposed upon herself. She adores her uncle both as uncle and as a man; Voltaire loves her, laughs at her, and worships her; in a word, this house is a refuge for an assemblage of contraries, and a delightful spectacle for lookers-on.

I am staying at home to-day, and expecting a number of visitors whom M. Tronchin is to bring to see me. I have had letters from all my family; I am going to dictate my answers; my preserver orders me to restrain myself in the matter of writing; you will be the only one to whom I shall write with my own hand. Good-bye! my beloved friend.

From M. GRIMM *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

I am uneasy, my beloved friend; I await your letters with the liveliest impatience, and I tremble to receive them; your last has made my heart sick. In God's name, get rid of the melancholy to which you are a prey. If you are dissatisfied with your past life, my friend, that is all the more reason why you should think of your future; it only rests with yourself to cause your errors to be forgotten; it seems to me that you are fairly on the way to that. I only fear your kindness of heart and your belief in the honesty of mankind; but, after all your melancholy experiences, that ought not to be beyond remedy. I cannot, I confess it, think of your past life without shuddering; you have always been the plaything of rascals and of people without any conscience, who are a thousand times more thoughtless than yourself; but, if I shudder, it is as someone who has escaped a great danger, and has saved from shipwreck what he holds most dear. My beloved friend, if I have been able to assist in restoring you to yourself, am I not only too happy, and are you not very glad to be under this obligation to the man whom you love most in the world, and to whom you are dearer than life? There is nothing at all, then, in your present situation which ought not to fill your heart with comfort and that innocent and pure delight which has never yet entered the heart of the wicked; your past errors shall make virtue dearer and more precious to you; your confession of them to your friend is a sure proof of the nobility and loftiness of your soul; it is a blessing of which nothing can deprive you. The only thing that I desire at the present moment (I have no longer any fear about your health; M. Tronchin has written to me and answers for it) is to see you devote all your attention to the settlement of your affairs. It is essential, my adorable friend, that you should take a personal interest in them, so as to make yourself in future independent of all contingencies. Shall I confide to you the only thing which has sometimes caused me pain, even though slight? it is an observation that I have made. I sometimes said to myself: Of all men I am the one who has the least influence over Madame d'Épinay's mind; persons without character have made her submit all her life to their fancies; rascals have easily persuaded her to doubtful actions; while as for me, who can do myself the justice of saying that I have never, on any occasion, had anything else in view except her happiness, without any thought of myself,—I have often observed that she sought in motives of vanity or self-interest the origin of the advice in regard to which she thought I was misleading myself. The result of this has been that, on occasions of great importance to herself, I have not ventured to insist upon my opinion, or to oppose anything she did, for fear of being suspected of feelings of which my heart is incapable; and I saw the storm coming without being able to avert it. This, my beloved friend, is what has sometimes worried me; but I feel sure of gaining, if I persevere in my present conduct, the confidence of your mind, as I already possess that of your heart. I even think that I am not so far distant from this happiness, and, if you wish me to tell you everything, I feel hurt to think that you do not believe me sufficiently just or generous to forget myself when necessary.

The greatest compliment you could pay me would be to treat me with perfect confidence, a confidence without limits, which I am trying to deserve. In fact, I should wish no difference to exist between us; I should like your inmost thoughts to be as well known to me as to yourself, and would have this confidence extend as much to what concerns myself as to what has to do with you. If I felt a moment's uneasiness the day before we parted, the result has proved how well-founded it was. It was not your heart that I suspected; the words "you know what has prevented me," in which you justified yourself for the old secrets with which I reproached you, were bound to make me believe that Rousseau had perhaps again ventured to speak to you of me in a manner which you should not have permitted, of which your upright heart did not wish me to remain ignorant, but which your weakness did not allow you to inform me of with your natural frankness: had I not everything to fear for you from your desire to do him a service, which would have put a weapon into his hands against you? This it is, my beloved friend, which sensibly affects a heart that can never be happy again except through you—that only lives and feels for you. When I see that you extend your confidence so far to me, I shall have nothing further to desire. I have never loved you more affectionately than when you confided your errors to me with modest embarrassment. Such moments are the most glorious triumphs of virtue; they have made you more precious to my heart than your beauty and your kindness to me. They are so many tokens of sincere regard which you have vouchsafed to me, and I assure you that my heart is not unworthy of them; if they become habitual, then I shall say that we two are only one soul. Your promises to virtue will be the more binding in consequence, and will give you a strength of which the instability of your character has sometimes tended to deprive you. You see, my beloved friend, that it is just what you call your past errors that ought to make life more precious to you. Everything promises you a happy and agreeable future. You who, every evening, bear witness to yourself that you deserve the homage of all the honourable people who surround you, with your honest heart, with all the intellect that you possess, fortified against the poison of rascals and frivolous friends—what woman could be more worthy of esteem and happier than you!

It is time to finish this volume, but, out of pity for my repose, my beloved friend, drive all idea of sadness from your mind. So you have dined with Voltaire? I do not see why you should refuse his invitations so persistently; you must try to be on good terms with him, and to derive as much benefit as you can from the most fascinating, the most agreeable, and the most celebrated man in Europe; provided you do not intend to make him your intimate friend, all will be well. Good-night, my beloved and adorable friend, my sole and only blessing whom I miss every instant, and whom I shall always love more than my life!

P.S.—I forgot to tell you that I have shown Diderot all Rousseau's letters and your answers. All these horrible things have astounded him; he is easy-going, but the impression of the truth will remain. His natural honesty made him say that he felt obliged to inform me that, after the manner in which Mademoiselle le Vasseur has spoken of you, you ought not to allow her to set foot in your house again. I have not time to enter into details to-day. Only let me know if you are quite sure that, in all you have said to him, you have not compromised yourself at all in regard to the Comtesse, either from curiosity or otherwise. Good-night, this time! time presses. Adieu, my beloved friend!

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

No, my friend, I will no more fill your soul with terror; let us enjoy in advance the blessing which Heaven is preparing for us. When I remember that it is to you that I owe my happiness, it becomes still dearer to me. You assume that you have not as much influence over me as others had who did not deserve my confidence so much, and that, because I did not at that time speak to you as naturally as I do now. Oh, my dear Grimm! you know men so well! what an inference! Do you not see, and have you not always seen in all my actions that, on the contrary, it was my great esteem for you which made me ashamed of being so ill-deserving of yours in consequence of my weakness? I felt ashamed until I should have gained strength to imitate your firmness; I am nearer to it than I was, but I am at least so far superior to my past errors, that it would now cost me less effort to confess them all than to fall into them again. When I am well we will resume this subject, and all others necessary to be discussed for the sake of your happiness and my own; but, I confess, it now affects me too much, considering my present state of health. Your gentle reproaches and the delicacy of your complaints have deeply moved me; they have made me weep for joy and gratitude. Oh, my friend, I cannot think of you without emotion! Let it be enough for you to know that, under any circumstances, I will never in my life have another secret from you.

I am sure that I have not said a single word to Mademoiselle le Vasseur to justify the least cavilling. I have hardly ever got beyond "yes" and "no," and I do not understand this gossip at all; if she says anything else, it is a most atrocious calumny.

I could not prevent Linant from giving Rousseau an account of our journey; he had promised him to do so when he left, and I did not think it right to offer a formal opposition. He asked me if I had any message to send him; I replied that I would take that upon myself.

I have received the thanks of the Republic for the way in which I have treated Rousseau, and a formal deputation of watchmakers on the same subject. The people hold me in veneration on his account. M. Tronchin had previously informed me of the marks of distinction which were reserved for me; I was tempted to avoid them; but he declared that that was impossible. I rather dreaded the moment; however, I got out of it fairly well; I answered without violating the truth, or saying a word which could bring suspicion upon Rousseau.

My friend, I am so afraid of going too fast, that I prefer to go too slowly; that is the reason why I was not in a hurry to meet Voltaire's advances, and why I shall continue to act in the same manner. I have done rightly; he behaves very differently towards me than towards others, to judge from what everybody tells me. He has hitherto only seen women who have thrown themselves at his head, who wanted to be praised by him, and who have taken all his civilities literally. He is not fond of restraint, and there is little consistency in his wishes, perhaps not in his feelings either; this has made him act more freely than he ought to have done with women who were not his intimate friends. He writes verses to them, and then laughs at them. As I have no liking for verses or praise that has to be begged for, and do not desire to be made the object of ridicule, I adopted a different tone with him; he perceived it, and received me with the greatest respect and the most marked attention. I get on very well with his niece; but I managed to show the uncle that he alone attracted my homage, and that in a way which it seems to me was not over foolish, and which succeeded very well with him.

Excuse me: M. de Jully was very anxious that I should take rooms in his house; he even did what he could to induce me to do so; but, not to mention the restraint which his meddling and perpetual changes would have caused me, I should not have been able to have my son with me; and I do not want to lose sight of him, nor to leave him entirely to Linant. This poor man is more foolish than ever. People show him all kinds of attention, and he has no suspicion that it is in any way owing to me; he prides himself upon this as if it were no more than his due, and as if his eminent merits had gained him this notice. My son is much more with me than with him; he also often goes out with his uncle. M. de Jully dines and sups with me nearly every day. He has frequently asked me to give his compliments to you. I may have forgotten to do so, but I answer for you. He has undertaken to keep the family posted up about myself, and to relieve me of all such correspondence. I confess to you that he embarrasses me greatly when he goes with me to Voltaire's house; they banter him amusingly, and it is sometimes difficult for me to keep myself from laughing. De Jully is intelligent enough to perceive it, but he possesses none of the qualities required for getting out of it well. He is going to pay another visit to Switzerland.

M. Tronchin has introduced me to a M. * * *, a rich merchant of the country. He takes a great interest in me, no doubt out of friendship for M. Tronchin, to whom he is related. The latter has assured me that I can have full confidence in him. He is a man of intellect, and seems to be highly thought of. He is in correspondence, on matters of literature and politics, with several foreign courts. His manners are simple; he has little knowledge of the world; he has never been out of Geneva. Of all the persons whom I have seen here, he has the most pronounced republican views.

The following day.

If I were not suffering considerably this morning from the effects of a new remedy, I should be greatly disturbed by my present state of agitation, and should take it as a gloomy presentiment. Speaking of presentiments, I am a little troubled when I think of all the political confusion in the Northern Courts and of our position in Germany. I am afraid you will be sent again to that villainous Westphalia during an execrable winter. I should be very unhappy if this proved to be the case, and very sad if I could imagine it to be possible. What would become of my mother and daughter? But I put this idea amongst the chimeras which beset me when my nerves are unstrung. Meanwhile, tell me what you think of it, my friend, without any comment, for I forbid anyone to talk to me about it.

Tell me also about my mother and Pauline, for I am never tired of admiring the delicacy with which you make the most of everything that may please and content me.

Do not forget the Marquis de Croismare: tell him how much I love him, as also the Baron. I confess that I feel somewhat vain at the idea of being loved by all these worthy people. I sometimes say to myself that I deserve it, and I am glad to assign to each a place in my esteem and my heart, according to my inclination and the reciprocity of feeling that is shown towards me.

Tronchin has a delightful country-house in view for me at the city gate; he would like me to take up my quarters there in April. It is completely furnished and would cost me 100 francs a month, the same as the rooms which I now occupy, and which I could not keep. He would come there every day, and he promises to sleep there twice a week. I like the idea, since Tronchin has decided that I must remain here at least a year. I like it especially because I count positively upon your coming here; yes, yes, I am sure of it.

My mother informs me that she has seen M. Diderot at the Baron's, and that she is delighted with him. She talked a great deal to him about my friendship for him, such was her expression; it is too strong, and rather annoys me. It will be very amusing, however, if he is the man to take the phrase literally. There is no doubt that I esteem him for his virtues, and feel interested in him in consequence of his friendship for you. I admire his genius, and if I ever become sufficiently well acquainted with him to have a real regard for him, it will, perhaps, be for his faults—and that from vanity, for I am convinced that we have many similar ones. Tell me truly what was said during their conversation.

I have received a letter from Rousseau; I send it to you together with the answer which I immediately returned. Madame d'Houdetot has also written to me; you will find in the parcel an extract from her letter and my reply. As for old mother Le Vasseur, it is impossible for me to give her room, either at Paris or in the country, and, even if I could do so, I am afraid that M. d'Épinay would refuse to agree to my wishes. Settle her future as you think fit; provided that she is made comfortable, I will agree to anything. I intend to pay half her expenses; if that is not enough, I will pay more.

I yesterday went through a formality which I was unaware was necessary. Every Catholic is obliged to make a declaration to the Chief

Syndic, in order to get permission to live at Geneva. This is granted for a year, unless there are any personal reasons in the way, and, at the end of the year, it is necessary to have it renewed. Unless you come to see me, I do not feel sure that I shall renew my request.

From ROUSSEAU *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

Nothing is more natural, Madame, or more necessary than to leave your house, since you do not approve of my remaining there. After your refusal to consent that I should spend the rest of the winter at the Hermitage, I left it on the 15th of December. It was my fate to live there in spite of my friends and in spite of myself, and to remove from it in a similar manner.

I thank you for the stay which you induced me to make there, and I should thank you with greater pleasure if I had paid less dearly for it. You are right in judging that I am unhappy; no one in the world knows better than yourself how unhappy I am bound to be. If it is a misfortune to be deceived in the choice of friends, it is an equally cruel blow to be disabused of so delightful a mistake.

Your gardener has been paid up to the 1st of January.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* ROUSSEAU.

Geneva, January 17th.

Monsieur, I did not receive your letter of

December 17th until yesterday. It was sent to me in a box filled with different things, which has been all this time on the way. I will only reply to the postscript; as for the letter, I do not understand it properly; if we were in a position to come to an explanation, I should certainly put down all that has passed to a misunderstanding. To return to the postscript. You may remember, Monsieur, that we had agreed that the wages of the Hermitage gardener should go through your hands, to make him feel more clearly that he was your servant, and to spare you the unseemly and ridiculous scenes which his predecessor had made about them. The proof of this is, that his wages for the first quarter were put into your hands, and that I agreed with you, a few days before I left, that whatever you advanced should be repaid. I know that you at first made a difficulty about it; but it was I who had asked you to make these advances; it was only natural that I should discharge my obligations, and we agreed upon it. Cahouet has informed me that you have refused to take the money. There is certainly some mistake. I have given orders that it is to be offered you again; I do not see why you should want to pay my gardener, in spite of our agreement, and even beyond the term of your occupancy of the Hermitage. I therefore hope, Monsieur, that, remembering all that I have the honour to state, you will not refuse to be reimbursed to the amount which you have been good enough to lay out for me in advance.

Extract from a letter from the COMTESSE D'HOUDETOT *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

My dear sister, you know something of our hermit's lively ways; having become used to his character during the ten years that you have been his friend, you ought to be indulgent towards him, and to attach no more value to his words than he himself will when he is able to think of them calmly. I confess that I urged him not to leave the Hermitage at all. Leave him to himself and his reflections for a while, and you will find him the same as he always has been to you—respectful, friendly, and grateful, as he ought to be.

Answer from MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

My dear sister, you know me well enough to feel sure that I do not need any exhortation to be indulgent. If I have anything with which to reproach myself, it is with showing too much of it, and with too little discrimination, to everybody. Rousseau has decidedly shown a want of respect for me this summer, in suspecting me of odious and disgraceful behaviour in regard to both you and him. The more extravagant his suspicions were, and the more impertinent his conduct, the less notice I took. I contented myself with scolding him from time to time, with the friendliness which he has always experienced from me. But I was greatly astonished to learn, from a letter which he inadvertently showed me in a moment of annoyance, that at the very time when he was begging me, with tears in his eyes, to forgive him for the wrong he had done me, and assuring me that his life would not be long enough to atone for it, he was repeating to his friend M. Diderot those same accusations, the mere recollection of which caused him such bitter regret in my presence, and was allowing M. Diderot to express to him a very bad opinion of me. This duplicity, which lasted for nearly two months, disgusted me. I have heard, since I have been staying here, that Monsieur Grimm has broken off all intercourse with him, and I am sure that he would never have gone to such extremes without very grave reasons. In spite of all that, I assure you that Rousseau might have remained quietly at the Hermitage.

This is what took place subsequently. On my arrival here, I found a letter from him, in which he reproached me with having encouraged Diderot and yourself to urge him to accompany me on my journey. "Why all these subterfuges, this intrigue, and trickery?" he asked. His whole letter was in a similar tone. He asked me to forgive him for his suspicions, which (he added) he was unable to control. I replied that this letter did not agree with the regret which he had previously expressed; that there was something curious behind it; that others did not spend their lives in suspecting and insulting their friends, and that he was abusing the patience which, out of friendship, I had hitherto shown towards him. While my letter was on its way to Paris, my *concierge* informed me that Monsieur Rousseau had commissioned him to take my instructions in regard to my furniture, because he intended to leave the Hermitage. I gave my orders, simply and distinctly, in the event of his leaving. A few days later, I received a letter from the hermit, in answer to mine, in which, without further explanation, he absolutely broke off all connection with me, and told me that all friendship was over between us; then he added: "I intended to leave the Hermitage, and it was my duty to have done so; but my friends have prevented me, and I shall remain until spring, if you agree to it." I confess, my dear sister, that this man's duplicity frightened me; I should not, perhaps, have noticed his impertinence, but I did not wish to give a consent which might afterwards have become a source of annoyance. I accordingly replied: "Since you wanted to leave the Hermitage, and thought it was your duty to do so, I am astonished that your friends have detained you. As for myself, I never consult mine in regard to my duties, and I have no more to say to you about your own." That is all that has taken place, my dear sister; I am very glad that you know about it; however, I should not have said a word about it to you unless you had mentioned it to me first. The best thing that I can do, as far as my health is concerned, is to forget these melancholy incidents; I wish that I could call them nothing but follies, and feel that I was mistaken as to their real character. I have heard to-day that Rousseau has left the Hermitage, and has settled at Montmorency. I feel very sorry for him, but I am in no way responsible.

From M. GRIMM *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

My beloved friend, I cannot finish the day without complaining somewhat of my lonely lot. Ah! how soon happiness is spoilt, and how hard it is to become used to pain. Tell me every moment that you are well, that you are pleased with your stay, that you find as much pleasure in it as is possible, in order that the certainty of this may give me the courage necessary to decide me to remain so far away from you. The Marquis de Croismare told me yesterday that we were all the losers by your absence, the Baron d'Holbach more than anyone else; your house seemed made on purpose to calm his temper; you have made him sociable; it is certain that he is no longer the same man since he has known you. Reconciliation with the Syndic will be a more difficult matter than I at first imagined. No one is willing to take the first step.

You must have heard that Rousseau has left the Hermitage. Thérèse does not know where to find a shelter; she has incurred debts to the amount of more than fifteen *louis* in the district. The Comtesse intends to pay part of them: it is quite enough for *us* to have the old woman on our hands.

I have received your letter; if your preserver thinks it necessary for your health that you should stay in the country, you must not hesitate: you must prefer it to the town; but, my beloved friend, I am afraid that it will cause you great expense, and often oblige you to receive more visitors than you wish, and that it is not, perhaps, necessary for that rest and quiet which is an essential condition of your regimen. But, country or no, as soon as the fine weather comes, nothing shall prevent me from coming to see you. I had expected the time which M. Tronchin has prescribed for your cure. However, there is only one course to be taken, you must persevere. Ah! my dear, my beloved friend, how happy I should be if I were free! if I had no other care except to please you and to spend the remainder of my life with you!

Tell me if Tronchin really keeps back your letters when you are indisposed. That seems to me very hard, and yet very wise. Alas! he should not keep back mine, for, since your departure, I am like a stone, nothing can affect me; you have carried my heart away with you; I no longer possess one. I am afraid that, when I have once shared your exile, we shall wish it to last for ever. It is amusing that, since you have been at Geneva, the idea of settling there torments me, as if you were going to spend your life there. I see no happiness except at Geneva.

I know about the institution of the Corn Chamber which you mention. All its advantages are set forth in detail in a very interesting article in the Encyclopaedia on Political Economy. I admire all that my sublime friend says; but she will one day pay very dearly for the character of originals which she ventures to assign to certain politicians of my acquaintance. It is easy to see the meaning hidden under generalities: let me resume my tyrannical vigour, and you shall see.

So then, my dear friend, you are on good terms with Voltaire? So much the better; he must be a great resource to you; make the most of it for love of me. Adieu! my dear and beloved friend; I do not always answer your letters punctually, but in time I shall clear off all my arrears.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

I am so exhausted, my dear friend, by all the letters which I have just finished dictating, that I have scarcely strength left to write to you. I have just sent M. d'Épinay a scheme of study which I have drawn up for his son; I can say that I have drawn it up, for Linant has not so much as helped me with a single comma; indeed, he is not capable of it. Exercise and fencing take up a great deal of his pupil's time; and, as for work in the study, I want him to devote himself entirely to that of natural law, which is either not taught at all in Paris, or taught badly. I wish to take advantage of my stay here; the place has the highest reputation for such studies. I have made the acquaintance of a professor who has promised to come and give my son his lessons at my house.

The children are very well brought up here, because the parents take pains about it; for the schools are no better than in France. The object of these institutions has reference entirely to the position of minister, or, in a lesser degree, to that of magistrate; it seems curious to me that they have not yet thought of reforming these institutions in a city which is entirely commercial, where the humblest man of the people, if he deserves it, has the right of admittance to the chief magistracies, and where the ministers have no influence at all upon the management of affairs. Can you give me any reason for this curious fact, Mr. Philosopher? Nevertheless, it is perhaps the best-informed city in Europe.

Would you believe that there are more than 6,000 persons in Geneva employed in the watch-making trade, and nearly as many setters of stones; and that the trade in linens, silks, and haberdashery is very considerable. It is true that, as Savoy has no cities, wares are brought wholesale to Geneva, where they are sold retail; in spite of that, I should not have thought, from its position, that it would have been so commercial. It is quite true that Tronchin does not wish me to open my letters when my nerves are upset; but I have pointed out to him that impatience and uncertainty are a far greater evil for me than the strongest emotion. He has told me to give the preference to what will cause me the least emotion; he begs I will be honest with him; I believe that I shall be.

So you consider the idea of settling here, which worries you so, to be a singular one. I do not know whether that means anything or not, but it is my vision also, a vision which has fixed itself in my head so firmly that I cannot drive it out. Oh! if only four people could be transported here, I would willingly agree never to set eyes upon Paris again.

I received a visit yesterday from a gentleman of eighty years of age; we are both in love with each other. I call him Roland Meredith,[1] because he resembles him. He is an original, but his originality is very piquant, and always accompanied by an inexhaustible fund of kindness; anyone can see this in his face.

I am going to spend two or three days at Voltaire's house with M. Tronchin. Really, I discover every day new features in Tronchin which inspire me with boundless respect and regard for him: his charity, his disinterestedness, his affection and care for his wife are unexampled; and, now that I know her, I declare to you that she is the sulkiest and most unendurable creature in existence. If I ever discover a fault in this man . . . I shudder to think of it, I shall be obliged to treat it with contempt, for it will be shocking. Good-night, my friend! I will finish my letter at Voltaire's, as I have no time to-day.

Two days later.

There is no leisure to do anything at Voltaire's, my friend; I have only just enough time to close my

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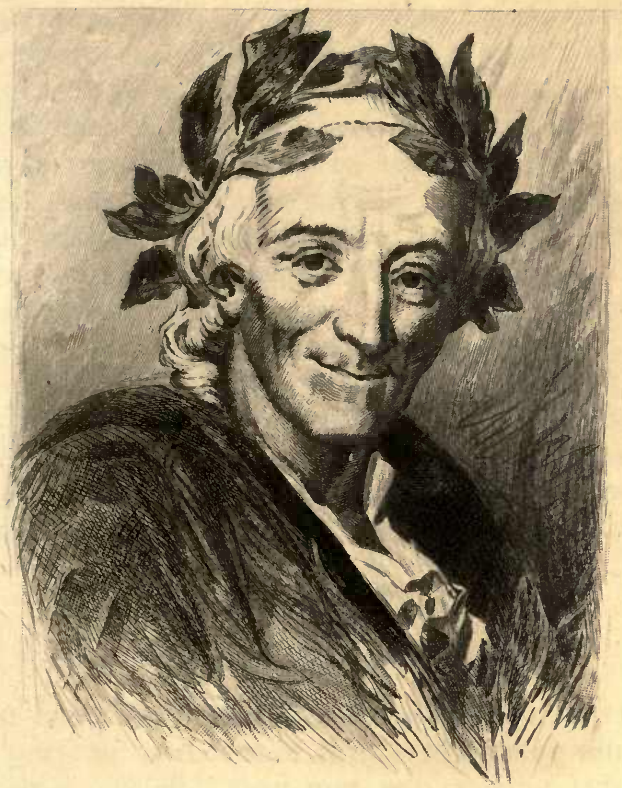
[1] One of the characters in Richardson's *Sir Charles Grandison*.

PORTRAIT OF VOLTAIRE

ETCHED BY S. A. SCHOFF,
FROM OLD PRINTS BY PORTELLE AND BROMLEY



letter. I have spent the day alone with him and his niece; and, really, he must be tired of telling me stories. While I asked his permission to write a few lines (that you might not be uneasy about my health, which is good), he expressed a wish to remain, in order to see what my big black eyes say when I am writing. He is sitting in front of me, poking the fire; he laughs, and declares that I am laughing at him, and that I seem to be criticizing him. I tell him I am writing all that he says, because that is worth all my thoughts. . . . I return to the city to-night, where I will reply to your letters . . . it is impossible to do anything here. Good-bye! Remember me if M. Diderot writes anything which may be sent to me. His works afford me such great pleasure, that I am worthy of this confidence.

From M. GRIMM *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

You know how we have tormented ourselves to no purpose to reconcile M. de Margency and the Baron. Well! they met out walking, and without anyone asking them, they accosted each other with an air of the greatest friendliness and as if nothing had taken place. Really, I believe that everybody is going mad.

Here is a freak of which the Comtesse d'Houdetot was guilty the day before yesterday. She fell like a bombshell into the Baron d'Holbach's house, without any announcement; she told him that she had found his name and his wife's left at her house, and that she was very sorry that she was not at home. What do you say of that? For my part, I do not believe she is a liar, and I do not know what to think of it. If she has not been dreaming (of which she is quite capable), someone must have amused himself by leaving the Baron's name at her house. Another piece of folly: I do not know whether I told you that the Marquis de Saint-Lambert was spending his winter at Aix-la-Chapelle, which has mightily displeased the Comtesse. Well, she has written letter after letter to the Prince Soubise, Saint-Lambert's friend, whom she does not know, and to Madame de ***, to get them to persuade Saint-Lambert to spend the winter in Paris. What particularly shocked Madame de *** was, that she commissioned her to persuade the Prince, thereby committing the indiscretion of supposing that she had some influence with him. All this shows an imprudence which pains me, for the angelic creature is good and amiable, and will end by ruining herself by her repeated follies.

See, my dear friend, what is the effect of misplaced frankness and candour, such as the Comtesse has shown; but the public, which judges severely, not only considers her wrong-headed, but a woman without shame or modesty. And that is how people lose esteem and regard without suspecting it!

Since you have trusted me with Mother le Vasseur's future, I have found quarters for her with one of her relations, an artisan, for 15 *sous* a day and 60 *livres* rent. I send you a list of the things she wanted, and which I have given her from you, out of what was removed from the Hermitage.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

The post has missed twice, and I am suffering from great dearth of news. It will be a week to-morrow since I heard from you, my dear friend, so I feel rather melancholy. I have scarcely courage to write. See what it is to be more than 100 leagues apart. However, I am going to make an effort and try to tell you what I think of Voltaire, until I have the courage to speak to you about myself and what concerns me.

Well, my friend, I should not like to live with him continually; he has no fixed principles; he counts too much upon his memory, and frequently abuses it. I think that it sometimes has a bad effect upon his conversation; he repeats more than he says, and he never leaves others anything to do. He is a bad talker, and humiliates people's self-esteem; he states the arguments for and against, as long as you please, always with fresh charm, it is true, and, nevertheless, he always seems to be laughing at everything and everybody, even himself. He has no philosophy in his head; he bristles with petty childish prejudices. One could perhaps forgive him these for the sake of his charms, the brilliancy of his intellect, and his originality, if he did not make such a show of his efforts to shake them off. His inconsistencies are funny, and he is very amusing to see in the midst of it all.

But I do not care for people who can do nothing but amuse me. As for Madame his niece, she is too utterly absurd.

A few days ago a book appeared which has greatly excited people's minds, and has caused some very interesting discussions amongst various persons in the country, because they declare that their constitution is concerned in it. Voltaire has got mixed up in it in consequence of some strong language which he has used on the subject against the priests. The fat niece is greatly displeased, because all the magistrates have not taken her uncle's part. She flings her fat hands and her little arms alternately above her head, curses with unearthly shrieks laws, republics, and above all, those rascally republicans who go on foot, who are obliged to endure the outcries of their priests, and who think themselves free. It is most amusing to see and hear her.

Monsieur de Jully has written to me from Neufchatel; he seems very busy. I do not understand it at all.

I have received a letter from Margency, the first since I have been here; I think it cold and contemptuous, and I do not quite know why he has written to me. I intend to reply to it in a few days, and I shall wait very patiently to hear from him. By the last post I received a parcel of letters which had been sent to me at Paris. For the future, my friend, I will ask you to open them and only to send on to me those which you think are worth the trouble. At the beginning of the new year I am in the habit of receiving some from several poor people, for whom I have been glad to do some slight favour, and I should not like to miss replying to them. If they contain nothing of a more private nature, it will be sufficient to let me know that they have written, and then I will answer them as if I had received their letters. I think that my son is benefiting greatly by his stay; example has a great influence upon children; he is a noticeable proof of this. He no longer cares for his velvet coat or his lace; he sees no one else wearing them; his own coat, on the other hand, has caused him to be laughed at, and as distinction and respect are here bestowed in proportion to merit, this inspires him with a spirit of emulation, the effect of which we can see every day. One of the things which has struck him most is the visit which he has paid for me to M. Abauzit. He found him living on the third floor, facing his office, which was lighted by two lamps, his study amply furnished with books, and his drawing-room with a miserable carpet. This worthy man, in spite of his great age, took the trouble to escort my son back with a light, because his only maid-servant had gone out. When my son saw this virtuous citizen greeted by the people with blessings, as they passed through the streets, it was easy for him to appreciate his fine coat at its true value. Adieu! I will tell you the rest by the next post.

From M. GRIMM *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

I have just come from the theatre; I have been asked whether it was true that you did not stir from Voltaire's house, and that you did the honours there. I replied that M. de Voltaire had been very polite to you, and that you had dined there twice. You see, my dear friend, that, however little handle your letters afford to spite and jealousy, it will be certain to be made the most of. To your husband, above all, one must only speak about trifles, for I have discovered that it is to him that you owe these absurd statements. He is proud, for your sake, of the advances made to you by Voltaire—as if you did not deserve them. Impress upon Linant never to give an account of everything that you do.

I have received a letter from Saint-Lambert, in which he reproaches me with having been too severe upon the hermit. He judges of him at his ease, and without knowing the real matter in question; however, he is a very just man. Good-night! my dear friend, I am going to rest my eyes, which are rather bad. I am expecting to hear from you to-morrow; that is all that is left of my happiness. Does not this make you pity me?

The following day.

You are right to make your son study natural law; it is of remarkable assistance in forming the character. You must see what his will turn out, watch over it, and expect nothing from it.

By this means, if it turns out well, you will have all the more reason for satisfaction; if not, it will pain you less; in any case, your plan is admirable, and worthy of a woman of talent. Ah! how delightful it is to me to find you so earnestly engaged in your duties!

Rousseau's desertion is beginning to be talked about; all this does not cheer me greatly. I regret to see that people are mistaken as to the honourable and generous motive which led you to do him a kindness. However, while they blame his present conduct, they can see in what you have done for him nothing but an affected singularity and a ridiculous pretentiousness; you can guess how I endure such gossip, I who know how far removed you are from any affectation or pretentiousness of any kind—but that is what one gets by obliging madmen. My dear friend, let us commit no more imprudences; it is more important than you think.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

My friend, I am as sensible as yourself of the importance of persuading Linant to give no account of what is going on here; I have already told him that such was my desire; but he has assured me with such sincerity that this would show a want of confidence in M. d'Épinay, who made him promise, before he left, that he would tell him everything, that I could not help laughing in his face. "Do you know," I said, "that, in this case, I have nothing to do but to look upon you as a spy? and such a part is not considered honourable in any country." The poor man was confounded by this argument; however, I left him free to continue his diary of events, provided that he never said a word about my diet, or M. Tronchin.

The latter told me yesterday that, for the sake of satisfaction, it was necessary that he should tell a certain person who lives here that Rousseau had left the Hermitage. This person is enthusiastic about Rousseau, and it was he who came to thank me in the name of the rest for all that I have done for him. I replied, "As I know that you are very discreet, you can state the fact if you think it necessary; but remember that I have enjoined, and still enjoin upon you the most profound silence in regard to his behaviour and all that I have confided to you in regard to the matter. If he complains, I should perhaps be wanting in self-respect if I did not reply; but, if he says nothing, I intend to do the same." The Preserver approved of my decision, and limited himself to saying to this person that Rousseau had left the Hermitage, and that I had only heard of it through my *concierge*. Deluc (that is his name) came to see me this morning, with tears in his eyes, and assured me that he and the Republic would continue to show the gratitude in which their fellow-citizen appeared to be deficient. He worried me to tell him the details and reasons for his behaviour, in order, so he said, to console me. He appeared highly indignant with Rousseau; but I still confined myself to saying, "He is a madman whom I pity with all my heart; do not ask me any more about it, I beg you, I can tell you nothing further; besides, I pity him, but I am neither grieved nor angry with him, that I swear to you." And, in fact, my friend, that is just my feeling.

As to what you tell me about the gossip of the public, if my motives in doing a service to Rousseau had been such as they are supposed, I should certainly have been deeply grieved at being found out; but such motives are so far removed from my heart, that I cannot feel in any way affected by such injustice. I think, my friend, that you attach too much importance to it. I feel the reason for it, and it is very precious to me; but I am sorry to find your peace of mind disturbed. That is the only thing about the whole incident that affects me. You know that I have never reckoned upon the gratitude of those to whom I have rendered a service, least of all upon Rousseau's. Nor have I ever done good with the idea of being commended, or because I was afraid of being blamed for not doing it. If the fear of blame has sometimes determined my actions, it has only been in matters of indifference; but it exercises no influence upon my feelings, nor upon the actions dictated by my heart. I thought to alleviate the lot of an unhappy man, and, as this was the only motive that induced me to act, if I had my choice of action over again, I should act in the same manner with the same motive, whatever might be the result of it. This being assumed, what do I care for the judgment of others! What I say is no mere words, or an idle show of philosophy. You have seen me act; you have seen me think. In short, you know me well enough to know that I am unable to pretend a calmness which I do not feel. I confess to you, my friend, that I cannot help believing that my absence makes you take rather a gloomy view of this matter.

You have guessed correctly; my plan of education seemed to M. d'Épinay whimsical and far too serious. "What can a child learn if people do nothing but talk with him? These walks, which you make him take for the sake of his health, will weary him to death, if you make use of them to instruct him. Besides, this study of natural law seems to me hardly necessary; it is not taught in this country, because it is useless. It is Latin that he must learn; it is not even necessary that he should understand his authors well, which one never reads after once leaving school, seeing that it leads to nothing; if he can only understand the Novellae[1] of Justinian, I shall be satisfied. Nor do I advise the discontinuance of the study of polite accomplishments for two years; it is the most valuable time for acquiring them, and should be made use of the more carefully, as the child is more inclined towards them. I should therefore like him to study the violin for two hours every day, and popular games for the same length of time; he must know how to keep his money; arrange the rest as you like; but remember that it is my desire; and I hope that you will not make me regret my kindness in allowing my son to remain so long at a distance from me."

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[1] "The Novels," or "Novellae Constitutiones": part of that Emperor's treatise on Roman Law. Together with the Institute, Digest and Code, they constitute the whole body of law which passes under the name of Justinian.

Whatever M. d'Épinay may say, I shall not renounce my plan altogether. Have no fear, my friend, I shall not exhaust myself in useless attentions injurious to my health. I will do nothing by myself, but I will have it done in my presence; I intend to devote two hours every morning to this, and, occasionally, after dinner.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

I want to talk to you, my friend; you will see how greatly a woman is to be pitied who has the misfortune to be united to a man without character or morals, and how one becomes the subject of public gossip without suspecting it.

My Preserver told me this morning that a certain Marquis de B*** had just arrived here on a visit to Voltaire, in order to consult him about some poem he has written; he is not acquainted with him, but he brings a letter from one of his friends to his wife, who is at Geneva, and governs Voltaire despotically. This woman is a kind of wit, from what I hear; she thinks herself a philosopher, because she can write tolerable verses; her mania is to instruct; she has quite seduced Voltaire; and the husband, who is a good-natured fellow and a mass of complaisance, pretended to believe in her bad health, and, by bringing her to Geneva, has satisfied her vanity, which made her anxious to play a part. Well, this husband is M. d'Épinay, and the wife is—myself. Monsieur Tronchin thought that I was more philosophical than I am when he told me this story. I confess, my friend, that I have been greatly affected by it. However, as the doctor says, what real harm can it do me? I know nothing about it, but it is humiliating to be thus defamed. Of all those who have laughed at this story, who has taken sufficient interest in it to investigate it? So now I am turned into ridicule! people will never speak of me to one another, when I am present, without saying, "Ah! that is the witty woman."

If M. de B*** ventures to present himself with his letter, you can guess that my reception of him will not be very encouraging. The Preserver and myself dine at Voltaire's to-morrow. Adieu! my friend.

The following day.

We have just come from Voltaire's; he was more gay, more amiable, more extravagant than when he was fifteen years old; he has treated me to the most amusing declarations. Your patient, he said to M. Tronchin, is truly philosophical; she has discovered the great secret of making the most of her manner of life; I should like to be her pupil; but I am too old to change my habits. We are here a troop of fools, who have, on the other hand, made the worst of it. What is to be done with it? Ah, my philosopher! you are an eagle in a gauze cage. If I were not dying, I would have told you all that in verse.

I have received a letter from Rousseau to-day; it is more impertinent than all the rest. As I do not deserve it, I hope that it will not affect me long; but I could hardly avoid a feeling of pain when I read it. I shall certainly not answer it; I am sure that you will not allow yourself to speak of him. As for me, I have forbidden myself to pronounce even his name; as I have nothing good to say of him, he need not fear that I shall ever speak of him from this time forth. But, in order to understand this letter, you must know that, in replying to the last he wrote me, I reminded him that we had agreed that he should pay the Hermitage gardener, and I added that, if he had paid anything in advance to him, I would give instructions for the sum to be repaid to him. Good-bye! my beloved friend, I impatiently await news of all who are dear to me.

By-the-way, I forgot to tell you that the Marquis de B*** has arrived; he presented himself as coming from my husband, but he gave me no letter, and said nothing about one. I received him politely, but coldly. His visit did not last long; and, as he did not ask permission to call again when he left, he has spared me the necessity of refusing to see him, which I had quite decided to do. Good-bye! I must leave you for to-day. I am expecting my Preserver.

From ROUSSEAU *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

I find, Madame, that my letters are always so unfortunate as to reach you very late. What is certain is, that your letter of January 17th was only put into my hands on the 17th of *this* month by M. Cahouet; apparently your correspondent has kept it back all this time. I will not undertake to explain what you have resolved not to listen to; and I wonder how so much talent can be combined with so little intelligence. But I ought no longer to be surprised at it, since, a long time ago, you boasted to me of this very defect.

As it has never been my intention to accept repayment for your gardener's wages, it is scarcely likely that I should now change my mind in regard to that. The agreement which you bring forward as an objection was one of those vague agreements which are made in order to avoid disputes or defer them, and are really nothing but refusals. It is true that, in the month of September, 1756, you sent me money by your coachman to pay the former gardener, and that it was I who settled his account.

It is also true that I have always paid his successor out of my own money. As for his first quarter's wages, which you say you have sent me, it seems to me, Madame, that you ought to know the contrary; what is very certain is, that they have never been even offered to me. In regard to the fortnight which remained to the end of the year, in which I left the Hermitage, you will agree that it was not worth while to deduct them. Heaven forbid that I should pretend to have repaid by that my stay at the Hermitage!

My heart cannot put so low a value upon the attentions of friendship; but, although you fixed this price yourself, never has so dear a rent been paid.

I have heard of the strange language used about me by your correspondents in Paris, and I judge from it of the language used by yourself, perhaps a little more politely, at Geneva. Can there be such pleasure in doing harm, and to those who have once been friends? So be it; I shall never be able to appreciate that pleasure, even in my own defence. Say, do what you please; my only answer to you is silence, patience, and an honest life. If you design any fresh torment for me, make haste about it, for I feel that you may not long be able to enjoy the satisfaction of it.

From Madame d'Épinay *to* M. Grimm.

I am pretty well to-day, though excessively weak. It sometimes occurs to me that M. Tronchin is concealing my real condition from me. My friend, write to him and get him to tell you truly what he thinks about it; do not, however, believe that my hysteria has led me to consider the state of my health in general to be more dangerous than it really is, nor that it deceives me in regard to the impression which I cannot help feeling: here is a proof of it. M. Tronchin has enemies, like every person of merit: would you believe that they have chosen the moment when I was suffering most to come and disparage him to me, to frighten me about his absent-mindedness, and to tell me numerous stories about all the people whose death he has caused by his negligence; and, lastly, it was insinuated to me that it was imprudent on my part not to at least consult his rival—a much cleverer and safer man. This only aroused my indignation. I showed the door to the person who gave me this advice, and I was pleased to find that, in spite of the uneasiness caused by my hysteria, it had not opened in my heart an entrance to injustice and malice.

Since I have spoken of absent-mindedness, I ought to tell you that this must not make you uneasy. It is true that no one could be more absent than M. Tronchin in society, but I believe that it is his learning which thus absorbs him, for fair-minded persons declare that they have never had reason to notice the same defect in his exercise of his profession. Although I am so sad, I cannot help telling you of an act of politeness on M. de Jully's part. Somehow or other, he learned that M. Tronchin was eager to have an English saddle-horse. You know that Jully has some very fine ones. He sent for the one that he values the most from Paris, and had it taken, fully harnessed, into Tronchin's stable, as a present from me. Could a kind action have been more gracefully performed? When I knew that the horse came from Paris, I could hardly keep from going to ask it for news of my friends. Adieu! my kind friend. I am going to take a walk to divert my thoughts. Tell mamma what M. de Jully has done.

From M. Grimm *to* Madame d'Épinay.

Alas! my beloved friend, I find that it is almost impossible for me to rejoin you for two or three months. You know how necessary my assistance is to Diderot, at a time when he is about to bring out a book of the greatest importance to him. This book is not finished. I have thrown out a few hints about my journey in order to make him hurry on with his work. He pointed out to me, very briefly, how unsuitable it would be, for you as well as for me. He said nothing to me that I had not already said in a confused sort of way to myself, or, rather, that I had not endeavoured to conceal from myself. I have only one answer to these awkwardnesses, which are very real, and that is, that I do not see how it will be possible for me to spend all the summer without you, and that, instead of becoming accustomed to your absence, I find it harder to endure every day. It would perhaps be more prudent to await your return here; but I have never felt so little courage for such an effort. To dissuade me from this scheme, you would have to promise me to return soon in perfect health; that is the only thing that could give me the necessary strength.

Before we make up our minds, you must once more have an understanding with M. Tronchin as to the time which he fixes for your return. Above all, my beloved friend, let us quietly consider this matter without making it worse than it already is; but bear in mind, that you cannot give me more precious marks of your affection than by driving away all these vapours, which poison the most delightful and tender feelings. We will live and die together, my beloved friend; this thought should support us amidst the gloomy annoyances and vexation which we are subjected to at the present moment.

I dined yesterday at your mother's. What you told me about M. de Jully diverted her greatly, but did not surprise her. Your husband, in whose presence the story of De Jully's handsome behaviour was being told to Madame d'Houdetot, made an answer that is too good to be lost: "Why, it is quite natural; Jully is a widower, he has no children, he is not in debt; he is able to make presents, and he ought to do so." "That is to say," rejoined the Comtesse, "that it is your children who have ruined *you*, and that it is by the king's command that you have incurred debts." The Marquis de Saint-Lambert has returned from the seaside. He and the Comtesse d'Houdetot have, like ourselves, broken off with Rousseau for ever; they know him for what he is, and begin to agree that you could not have behaved differently.

Adieu! my beloved friend; above all, no sadness; comfort me, give me courage; in truth, I need it more than yourself.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

I should like, but it would be impossible, to conceal from you the extreme pain which your last letter has caused me. It appears to me proved, if you still desire to rejoin me, that the slightest obstacle will be an insurmountable one, from the reflection that, if you do not surmount it, it is a sacrifice which you offer to reason, and for which we shall be subsequently recompensed; this excuse has more power than is imagined, especially if it is supported by an orator like Diderot. I see then that I shall spend my time here in waiting and longing for you; you will spend yours in wishing to come, in making all arrangements one day and upsetting them the next, in the hope that a few weeks more will weaken the bad effect you foresee from your journey, and, in short, you will not come at all. You would assure me now that you will come, that I should be convinced that you mean it, but that I should only reckon upon it when you had started. Meanwhile, let us discuss this journey as quietly as circumstances permit. As for Geneva, there will be no awkwardness at all. All my friends know that I am expecting a visit from you, and I guarantee that no shadow of dishonourable suspicion in regard to an honourable man enters the head of anyone here. At Paris it is different; people are sure to speak of it; perhaps it will be thought nothing of; nevertheless, you must take it into account. Alas! good heavens, they can only say what they have said already, and what they will say even if you do not come. In short, the happiness of our life is at stake, and would not that be sacrificing it to an idle fancy? I tell you frankly, after mature reflection, that not only should I not think any better of myself for entertaining so childish an apprehension, but that, in truth, I should blush to give way to it. Should persons, who think and act as we do, fear the censure of the public? As for your personal reasons, and the nature of the harm your coming to me might cause you, I do not know what they are; it is useless for me to try and find them out, I cannot guess them. Tell me them in detail, and I will answer them frankly; you will always find me ready to sacrifice my happiness to the least real benefit that you may derive from it; but as it is the feelings of the heart that make me think in this manner—not hot-headedness or misplaced heroism—I will never willingly consent to make such a sacrifice to an idle fancy.

Diderot's opinion has no weight with me, considering his ideas about me. I clearly see that he only looks upon it as a case of a lover running after his mistress. Those who know us will not, I hope, look upon it in the same light.

To come to my need of you; that is no chimera. I do my utmost to amuse myself, but I have striven even harder to make you believe that I was successful in amusing myself, to avoid increasing your grief. Now that your letter has destroyed all my hopes, I can no longer keep silence. I do not know whether my situation is, as you tell me, such that I ought not to be altogether unhappy; but I know that I have not yet spent a single day without weeping for sorrow, during the five months that I have been here, even on the days when I have allowed myself a few gleams of cheerfulness, which never had any better foundation than the hope of being with you again immediately. What, then, is a situation which is not altogether unhappy? It means that I am not going to drown myself, as I should do if I were never going to see you, Pauline, or my mother again. Tell me, do you know any comfort which you might be capable of feeling? Still less, then, do I. If you know any, do not leave me in ignorance of them; I shall be less to be pitied.

You ask me the date of my return. During the last week, my oracle has proclaimed it more than once very clearly and very imprudently. He maintains that I must not even think of it for fifteen months: but I have made up my mind, if I do not see you here, to return next winter, whatever happens. It is beyond my power to give a satisfactory reason for our separation. You must understand that, in spite of all the kindness that is shown me here, as soon as I begin to suffer, I am alone with my misfortunes. If I had thought that I should have remained here so long in so melancholy a frame of mind, I do not believe that I should have come at all. You may imagine how I am going to amuse myself at the present time, now that I can no longer count upon you. To return to the gossip of the public: once again, how will it affect me? Will they chatter any the less for it? Will not *our* public be sure to know that it is Diderot who has dissuaded you from this journey? I wager that, if the Baron does not know it already, he will know it to-morrow.

It only remains for me to entreat you not to be more unjust than I am. I pity you, and believe that you are as unhappy as myself. What pleasure, then, can you find in trying to persuade me that you alone are to be pitied, and that I ought to be almost satisfied? What effect such phrases have upon a tortured heart! How many times have you appeared to me still more unhappy, when my health obliged me to keep silence about our sorrows! Be sad no more, you say; what if I said the same to you? But no! I know too well how weak and powerless arguments are in such a case; they are only good to kill time with when we feel nothing. The only thing that can efface an irremediable misfortune is time; but we must not complain of those who are not without resources, when they neglect to make use of them. I see, or I think I see, that you do not expect to see me again until my return to Paris; you start with this idea as if it were quite settled; but since I cannot set out to-morrow, do not any longer be so cruel as to summon me in your letters to comfort you. Believe me, if I were free to go as you are, or at least, if I had no greater obstacles to surmount, I should have already set out; by "already set out" I mean, I should have fixed the date of my departure, for we must devote to our duties all the attention that they require. Your constant attendance upon the Prince, the need that Diderot may have for your services, as long as he does not abuse it in order to detain you—there are your duties; the rest is an idle fancy; but you must clearly understand that each phrase in which you summon me is a stab with a dagger. Let us say no more about it.

From M. Grimm *to* Madame d'Épinay.

My dear friend, the letter I have just received from you has pierced my heart; nothing can console me for it. Why are you so ingenious at tormenting and driving yourself to despair? I spoke to you of the awkwardness which my journey might cause; it is real; but did I tell you that I should give in to it? Did I not, on the contrary, declare to you that it was quite impossible for me to spend the summer without you? My beloved friend, I entreat you, believe what I say, and do not get excited; you will injure your health for mere idle fancies; how shall I be able to rest? wait till Diderot's work has appeared; if I lose a day here, I will then allow you to condemn me; but, once again, do not see in my letters any more than they contain, and exaggerate nothing. Is it so surprising that I should have spoken to you of the awkwardness connected with my journey, after what Diderot said to me, and after what we ourselves had more than once thought about it? But did I say that, after thinking all this over, I ought not to go? On the contrary, my friend, trust me and the weariness which besets me; I swear to you that, were it not for Diderot's work, I should not be here on the first of next month. Oh, cruel friend! why torment yourself thus and drive me to despair?

You imagine that Diderot has discussed this matter at length; that is by no means the case; he only said a few words to me about it, and we only spoke of it as two men of feeling and delicacy. He does not disapprove, he only mentions the inconveniences of it, and, in spite of that, he has no doubt that I shall go to rejoin you. Rest assured that the Baron knows nothing about it; and even if he did, what does it matter to me? I do not propose to make a mystery of my journey. If you want to reduce me to despair, you have only to tell me once again that you no longer depend upon me. Truly, I have not deserved that you should have this opinion of me. My dearly beloved friend, it is impossible for me to know that you are in trouble and to suppose that I am the cause of it, however innocent I may be. But I must discontinue the practice, which is so pleasant to me, of telling you all my inmost thoughts. If I am one day troubled about disagreeable things or the awkwardness of our position, I shall have to conceal from you what I think, for fear of the suppositions which your lively imagination may suggest to you. I swear to you that nothing but Diderot's work keeps me in Paris. It is true that I should consider it an unpardonable weakness on my part to leave him at this moment; but cannot you, who possess my whole heart, read in it all that it costs me to stay? Who can do justice better than you to the greatness of this sacrifice? Hasten to comfort me and efface the ideas with which your letter has filled my soul; tell me that you expect me, that all is ready for my reception.

Adieu, my dear friend, my only love! I will say no more to you about coming to console me; but I will fly to you at once and forget the whole world. I will prove to you that you are the most revered, the best loved, and the most adorable creature in the universe.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

It is astonishing, my friend, how a word from you can cheer or dishearten me. The letter which I have just received comforts and encourages me; if you had used the same language in your former letters, I should not have lost all heart. You say that, as soon as M. Diderot leaves you free, you will come. Ah! did I ever ask anything else? You add that you would not be able to endure yourself if you failed him on so important an occasion: should I, my friend, feel for you the confidence and affection with which my heart is full, if you were capable of failing in the duties of friendship? I should have to be at death's door to justify your leaving before the time; but, my dear friend, there was no question of anything of the kind. It was a frightened person who begged me to persuade him not to come at all, who was in despair at the idea, but who was already calculating with impatience the date of my return, since he believed it was impossible for him to rejoin me. Do not oblige me to make my apology, do you say? Ah! what need is there for you to do so? In all that I have written, did I ever for a moment imagine that you were not burning to set out? No, if you will read my tiresome repetitions over again, you will see that I only blame you for making yourself unhappy for the sake of mere fancies. No doubt, the public must be respected, but it is not hard to manage; provided that it can see clearly, it is satisfied, and even ends by respecting . . . . And even supposing it should not? Alas! good heavens, what an illusory sacrifice! I have only one word more to add, which I hope need not have been written; that is, to say how grieved I am that my letters have caused you pain. Adieu! my friend, time presses, the post is leaving, and I do not want to lose a minute in setting your mind at ease.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

I do not know what they think about my health, or what reply M. Tronchin will make if you write to him, but I know how I feel, and that is, very ill. I have suffered from convulsive cramp, I am terribly fatigued; if you want an excuse for coming here, this would only be too valid a one. I am making an effort to ask you to come as soon as you can. I much fear that I shall not long enjoy the happiness of being dear to you; come, my dear friend! believe me when I tell you that I am not trying to persuade you without good cause, or owing to misplaced alarm.

From M. DE JULLY *to* M. GRIMM.

Monsieur, I do not venture to write to inform my brother of the state of his wife's health, and I have strictly forbidden Linant to say a word about it, until a change takes place, of which M. Tronchin still gives us hopes, but for which, however, he will not answer. My sister-in-law's symptoms, according to what he says, are more alarming than dangerous; I confess that she seems to me very ill. M. Tronchin is content to let nature act at this critical moment, which he regards as decisive one way or the other; but, I repeat, he will answer for nothing. She is uneasy; she is wretched; we are trying to console her. I confess that I should be very glad if your engagements would allow you to leave immediately; I think that your presence would give her mind the tranquillity which is so necessary to it. She knows that I am writing to you; she asked me to do so, being unable to write herself; but she does not know what I am telling you. I think, Monsieur, that Madame d'Esclavelles should be spared this alarm; whatever happens, I will write to her by the next post. I hasten to close my letter, with renewed expressions of my regard for you.

From M. GRIMM *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

My beloved friend, I have just written a letter three pages long to the Preserver. It is the kind of letter you wished, and it will be difficult for him to avoid giving me a definite answer. I will wait until I have received it, and be guided by it in everything. I will take the course that is most prudent, most suitable, and least contrary to our happiness. For the rest, your letter has grieved me greatly, not in regard to your symptoms, which I look upon as of little consequence, but because of the frame of mind in which I see you are. What, then, has become of your courage all at once? and why do you no longer put trust in the word of a man who, for the last eight months, has never varied? I entreat you, then, my beloved friend, do not grieve me by such misplaced discouragement. My letter to the Preserver left the day before yesterday; I hope he will receive it to-morrow, and that his answer will enable me to talk with a little more calmness.

From M. Grimm *to* Madame d'Épinay.

I have received a letter from M. de Jully, and I am going to start for Geneva. After the letter which I have also received from M. Tronchin, it is impossible for me to believe that I am threatened by the greatest of misfortunes. Had it not been for his letter, I do not think I should now be alive. I have just bought a post-chaise. As I shall not be able to start before noon to-morrow, however energetic I am, I shall wait for the post which left you on the 18th; to-morrow, at five o'clock in the evening, I shall no longer be in Paris; you may count upon that. I shall travel day and night, so that on Tuesday or Wednesday

I hope to be near you. Your mother is deeply grieved at not being able to rejoin you. Good-bye! my beloved friend; I bring you a heart torn by grief and despair. One moment spent with you will make me forget all these troubles.

I shall get down either at your house or at M. de Jully's.

From M. DIDEROT *to* M. GRIMM.

Well, my friend, have you arrived, have you somewhat recovered from your fright? I do not know what you have said to Madame d'Esclavelles, but she sent to my house the third day after your departure at six o'clock in the morning, to tell me of the news she had heard of her daughter. We want a line in your handwriting to set us a little at our ease; to tell us that you have arrived in good health, and that Madame d'Épinay is better. Oh! how pleased I should be for all our sakes if it proved nothing worse than an alarm. Meanwhile, I am pining away from weariness; what do you want me to do with the others? I do not know what to say to them. I send you the rest of the work which you left me. In any case, I have taken duplicates, and I am going to try and get this enormous parcel franked.

While you were on the road, our friends supposed that we were both in the country; they only knew of your departure yesterday. I appeared, like a ghost, at the Baron's, in the midst of a large company. At first, I took him aside. I told him what had happened, and in the middle of dinner he repeated it before all. On this occasion, the Marquis de Croismare was the only person with whom I was really satisfied. Everyone gossiped as he pleased about the incident.

Good-bye! my friend, good-bye! enjoy your trip, let me know all you do. I was too grieved at your departure for you to believe your return to be indifferent to me; but first, I want you to feel satisfied. Come back when you please; if that is soon, you will be satisfied with yourself; if it is not soon, you will still be satisfied with yourself; whatever you do, you will always be satisfied, because you have in your heart principles which will never deceive you. Listen to them alone where you are, and, on your return to Paris, still listen to them alone. Happily, their voice cries aloud in you, and will stifle all the petty tittle-tattle of cavil which will not reach your ear. I wish you happy wherever you may be. I love you sincerely; I feel it, both when you are with me and when you are away from me. Do not forget me when you are with M. Tronchin. Present my respects to M. de Jully and Madame d'Épinay; tell her son that I shall love him if he is good, and that it is goodness that we value above everything. Read and correct the papers that I send you, and at least let me know that I have nothing more to do with them, and that you are satisfied. Once again, good-bye!

From M. GRIMM *to* M. DIDEROT.

My friend, you ought to have received a few words from me, which I addressed to Madame d'Esclavelles, informing you of my arrival. You will, I feel sure, readily pardon me for not having written to you since. If Madame d'Épinay's condition is not alarming at the present moment, I confess it is none the less disquieting as regards the future; it needs all my confidence in M. Tronchin's knowledge for me not to feel greatly alarmed at it. Her excessive weakness is almost inconceivable. It is clear to me that, if she had not made up her mind to come here, she would not be alive at the present moment. I congratulate myself every moment upon having come here; I dare to flatter myself that my presence was necessary to her. She had completely lost courage; and it is easy to see that she needed the assistance of friendship to endure the languor and weariness of her condition. You may guess that I am as yet unable to tell you anything more about my return. I am resolved to stay as long as my presence is necessary to Madame d'Épinay. I will try to help you from here with the rest of your work, which I have already commenced to read. I am going to work at some trifling remarks, which you will be at liberty to agree with or not, as you please. The last part of your work seems to me a masterpiece of eloquence and philosophy; my remarks only deal with trifles which I should certainly not think of criticizing in any other work but that of my friend Diderot; but I do not wish him to leave the ill-natured the least excuse for attacking him.

I expected that the Baron and company would blame my journey and the haste with which I decided upon it; but I have done my duty. What does the rest matter to me? As for what is said about Madame d'Épinay's stay here, I am well aware that she would have to die in order to justify the necessity of it; but, provided that she regains her health, she will have no more difficulty than myself in making up her mind in regard to the injustice of the public. The only thing that I regret is, that I was unable to take leave of the Prince before I started, and have absented myself without his permission; but I have just written to him, and I hope that he will excuse me after my explanation of the situation in which I found myself.

From M. Grimm *to* M. Diderot.

What, Diderot! do you mean to say you still think that? do the injustice and inconsistency of men astonish you? do you not see that it is you who are unjust in revolting against them? Let us only expect from them what they can give us, that is to say, little or nothing; that is the great secret of being just. No, you are not deceived, and you can maintain, with a clear conscience, that Madame d'Épinay was at death's door when she arrived here; that, during the eighteen months that she has been here, Tronchin has kept her alive as if by enchantment; that it is only during the last three months that she has been out of danger; that she is not yet well enough to endure the journey, and that she will not lose an instant in returning to Paris as soon as her cure is established. But I greatly fear that all the sacrifices she has made for the sake of her health will prove utterly useless, in view of the future that awaits her: the senseless, harsh, indecent, and foolish behaviour of her husband is inconceivable. Good God! how this woman is to be pitied! I should not be so troubled about her, if her strength were equal to her courage. She is gentle and confiding, peaceable, and, above all, fond of quietness; but her situation continually requires her to behave in an unnatural manner out of keeping with her character; nothing is so wearing and destructive to a machine that is naturally fragile.

I have burnt your letter, as you desired, but do not demand any similar sacrifices from me; you know that I like to keep everything that comes from my dear Diderot, and it would have caused me no inconvenience to keep this one like the rest. In the first place, Madame d'Épinay never shows any awkward curiosity in regard to what does not concern her; and, in the second place, believe me, all the false judgments and petty criticisms of those who do not profess to be her friends, do not affect her. I was very pleased by the way in which, a few days ago, she received one of those people who are so ready with their advice. Some one who had recently returned from Paris was presented to her a month ago. This man, apparently prejudiced by people who had no love for her, not only showed but little eagerness to see her, but, in his first visits, adopted a disparaging tone. He is an intelligent man, and soon perceived that he had been mistaken in Madame d'Épinay. He was clever enough to see that her excessive kindness, frankness, and timidity might help to make her appear in the wrong, as many persons suppose, when she really is not. He felt obliged to apologise to Madame d'Épinay for his conduct; he began by giving her to understand, awkwardly, but with the greatest courtesy, that those who had spoken of her to him had not done her justice. Seeing him approaching, she endeavoured to turn the conversation. We were five or six in number; and our friend always returned to his subject. His language became so unmistakable, although wrapped up in eulogies, that Madame d'Épinay suddenly rose, and said to him: "Monsieur, I have neither more nor fewer faults than any other woman, but I try to have as few as I can. Believe me, I am severe enough with myself. I certainly cannot see everything; but only my friends have the right to advise me. For the rest, I feel no curiosity as to what the world says about me—only as to what my friends think of me. When people speak of me, when they give me advice, I wish to be able to feel an affectionate interest in their reason for doing so; and for this, they must have acquired the right to inform me of it.

It is impossible to please everybody; but, if you wish to have a correct idea of what I am, I tell you that I am better than my reputation in Paris, but I do not flatter myself that I deserve the reputation with which I am honoured here; I can only aspire to deserve it." After this speech, which struck our friend dumb and caused me great pleasure, she very cleverly took H * * * by the arm, went off to take a turn on the terrace, and left us to finish his apology. Zounds! see what it is to have a quiet conscience.

I do not think you must count upon our returning before September. This date, although a long way off, has already alarmed the poor patient. In the endeavour to encourage her, I have exhausted all the truest suggestions of philosophy, which, it must be confessed, are least calculated to afford consolation to a sensitive heart; my real object is not so much to comfort her as to lessen that infatuation, which would be the happiness of my life, if we were destined to live as we have lived during the last six months. She will always be the object of all my care and affection; but, in my turn, I may possibly be diverted from this delightful occupation by duties and affairs which, apparently, will be increased, and will afford me the consolation of ceasing to be an idle and useless being in society. The Court of * * * has urged me to undertake to keep up a correspondence with it; such an occupation would be very agreeable and congenial to me, and would afford me an opportunity of showing what I am capable of doing. I am only waiting for the Prince's consent (which I hope to receive soon) in order to accept the offer. However, I will only do so if they are willing to wait till I return to Paris, for I will not permit Madame d'Épinay to return alone, and I will trust no one but myself to see after the arrangements which are necessary for her on so fatiguing a journey. Do not mention my plans to anyone; their success perhaps depends upon their being kept secret. Good-bye! my friend, keep up your spirits, and let me always have good news of your health and self. You do not tell me if you are satisfied with my work; I am expecting the last instalments of yours.

From VOLTAIRE *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

This is probably the fiftieth letter that you will have received from Geneva. You must be tired to death of expressions of regret; however, you must receive mine; it is only fair that you should do so, because I have profited less than anyone else by the happiness of having you amongst us. Those who saw you every day have a very great advantage over us. If you had been willing to give us another winter, we would have acted comedy to you once a week. We have resolved to make merry, for fear of dying of grief at the bad news that reaches us in succession. My heart is French, I love to set a good example; but, truly, all our pleasures are spoilt by your absence and that of our friend, M. Grimm. What spectators and critics we have lost! But, Madame, is it not a shameful thing that the English, who do not believe in Jesus Christ, should take Surat, and be on the point of taking Quebec? Let them rule upon the seas of the two hemispheres, and let the troops of Cassell and Zell beat our splendid armies, our sins are the cause of it; it is philosophy which clearly brings down upon us the wrath of Heaven. The Maréchal de Contade and M. de la Clue must have furnished some articles to the Encyclopaedia. However, Tronchin performs miracles; everything is upside down; I will canonise him for the one which he has worked upon you, and I join with all Geneva in praying that God will immediately afflict you with some trifling ailment which will bring you back to us.

You have cruelly refused to let me read your two volumes;[1] you have not had confidence in me, and you have lavished it upon those who have abused it. Your books circulate in Geneva; I have them, and there are some imperfect copies in circulation. I am obliged to inform you of this; I am very fond of you and take a lively interest in you. Ah! Madame, you must only trust "solitaries" like myself or Grimm. Do not betray me, but endeavour to withdraw all these unworthy and mutilated copies, or allow me to make public the one which I have in my hands; this is really the only way to save you from the harm which these mangled productions are doing you.

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[1] "Mes Momens Heureux" and the "Lettres à mon Fils."

Adieu! Madame, the uncle and niece adore you, and are at your feet.

From MADAME DE H*** *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

Genève.

My dear Madame, how thoroughly we have appreciated the precious tokens of your remembrance of us! I can declare to you that it was entirely from a feeling of discretion that I did not write to you first; I respected your wish to be undisturbed, and I did not want to disturb the satisfaction which you must have felt at finding yourself reunited to a worthy and amiable family, and it is this very fact that arouses my gratitude, since I find that, amidst the liveliest and most eagerly expected enjoyment, you have been kind enough to remember your "good friends" of Geneva, as you are kind enough to call us. You are certainly very dear to them, my dear Madame, and your absence has caused the liveliest and most painful regret; but, while informing you of something that interests you, I must address to you a slight reproach, which I nevertheless hope you will take in good part.

You cruelly refused me the two small volumes which you have had printed here, and although you based your refusal on the ground that you gave them to no one, I flatter myself that I should have kept them better than the two friends whom you had excepted from the rule you had imposed upon yourself. Since you left, I have seen a copy in

Voltaire's hands, of which there are some very incorrect copies in circulation, from which others will certainly be printed, for everyone is fighting for them. I have seen several in which things have been inserted of which you would disapprove. According to these unreliable copies, certain ill-informed persons blame you for having printed family details. After we had discussed the possible remedy for this unlucky incident, my own and my husband's advice is, that you should combine the two volumes in one, and publish it. Such a work could not fail to do you honour, if it appeared in the form in which you have written it, and you would thereby show that you are not guilty of the offence which is attributed to you.

In short, Madame, we have thought it our duty to give you a faithful account of what took place. You will always find me equally zealous in your interests; we trust that you will feel convinced of this, and also of the tender and inviolable attachment with which I have the honour to remain, my dear Madame, etc.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* MADAME DE H***.

My thanks are due to you, Madame, for the friendship and sympathy which you have shown me, and I am truly touched by it. This kindness on your part entitles me to justify my refusal to give you the two volumes, and to tell you at length my opinion of the indiscretion of certain persons in making them public after my departure; I am extremely desirous of securing your approbation on this, as on every other occasion.

You have seen them, Madame, and you are in a position to agree with me that they were not written in order to be made public. I wrote them for the instruction and benefit of my children; I never thought that they would be exposed to any other criticism than that of a few private friends, whose advice and learning I am proud to follow. They have been written without correction; the faults with which I reproach my children are those of nearly all young people of their age; but, nevertheless, one might draw therefrom conclusions as to their characters, which, false and unjust as they would be, might perhaps notwithstanding do them harm. I should never have thought of printing them, had not chance procured me M. Gauffecourt's printing-press at my house. I at first intended only to take off two or three copies for my own amusement; but, afterwards, I was unable to refuse copies to some friends who, either from their long-standing acquaintance or the claims which they have acquired upon my gratitude, obliged me to break the rule which prudence had imposed upon me—not to give a copy to anyone. I added the condition that they should not leave their hands; they ought to have known me well enough to be convinced that the condition was meant in earnest. Other persons had asked me for the volumes with equal persistency. I sincerely regretted to refuse some of them, and you, Madame, are one of the number. I confess to you frankly, that I did not flatter myself that I had sufficient claim upon you to let you share the importance I attached, not to the work, but to its concealment. What has happened? I have been deceived and my confidence has been probably abused. It is not the first time, and I would readily say, I expect that it will not be the last.

So, then, my books have been read by strangers who have judged me severely; they have found me guilty of error. I believe it; it was a real one that my writings came into their hands; they do not necessarily know whether it was with my consent or not. I do not advise that they should be read in order to my justification: I should fail in my object if I let them be known by a larger number of people. Perhaps I should not even be the gainer by it; they are not written to occupy people's attention long, and I am convinced that they are no longer talked about. If these works were good, they would perhaps make me enemies; if they were worthless, they would bring ridicule upon me; and, if you wish me to tell you all, the eagerness with which people publish a work, under pretence of justifying themselves, always seems to me a sophism of vanity, the object of which is to bring before the world a production which they are very pleased with themselves for having written. Now, as the only merit that I can discover in my letters to my son is that of good intention, and, as I suppose this exists in the heart of every mother, it seems to me reduced to such trifling proportions, that it is not worth while to display it.

Such, Madame, is my profession of faith, and this is the answer which I leave you to make in my justification to those whose good opinion is worth seeking. I do not know which of my friends I have to reproach for his ill-considered zeal; I do not wish to know; it is not my intention to complain of him, whoever he may be, because I judge of him by his intention. I have written to them all to advise them to keep their promises more scrupulously, and to let them understand the consequences; this ought to be sufficient for them and me also.

I ask your forgiveness for these lengthy details. However, I am not afraid of having abused your friendship and the interest you have shown in me; I do not know how to thank you for it, but I know how to feel it. My gratitude can only be equalled by the very sincere and affectionate attachment which I have consecrated to you.

END OF THE MEMOIRS OF MADAME D'ÉPINAY

SOME ADDITIONAL CORRESPONDENCE

OF

MADAME D'ÉPINAY

Letter from MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to her Son.*

MY DEAR SON,—However much I may desire to sacrifice myself entirely to the care of your education, I cannot devote myself to all that my affection for you dictates. Business matters, weak and delicate health, your own occupations —all these frequently prevent me from having you near me, and deprive me of the satisfaction of following your studies carefully, and of sharing even your leisure and amusements. Do not, however, imagine that I lose sight of you during the time that we are separated; as far as my bad health permits, the greater part of it is spent in reflecting upon the means of perfecting your education. I had undertaken a considerable work upon this subject; but as I have always tried to offer you my advice in a natural and easy form, calculated to inspire you with an affection for your duties, I have resolved to give you this work in detail. I have noticed for some time that you take pleasure in writing and receiving letters: I will write some to you. The reflections which they may give rise to in your mind will subsequently serve as the subject of our conversations. At least, I flatter myself that you will not treat me worse than your other friends—you will sometimes answer me. We will talk, we will write to each other; we will seek in concert the means of rendering you happy; truth, reason, friendship, and confidence will guide us in this important and agreeable search.

My whole affection is divided between you and your sister. Since I have been a mother, my happiness has consisted in looking after my children. My care was at first limited to your health. If the prejudices of ordinary custom and want of experience have prevented me, during the early years of your life, from extending it beyond that, at least reflection, awakened and supported by maternal affection, enlightens and increases it more and more. Not only have I for a long time past devoted my attention to forming your heart and mind, but every day I feel that the watchful care of a mother is not limited to the present. It also leads her to foresee the future, to calculate from a distance the necessary results of the inclinations, talents, and character of a young man; of the state of life to which he seems called by circumstances, by his tastes, by his position; from these considerations she forms the general plan of the most suitable education. It is upon these principles that I have endeavoured to arrange yours. You enjoy the happy feeling of security which is natural to your age, without troubling yourself in regard to a future which you do not know. The moment alone determines your affections and your will; it is my duty to foresee the consequences of these, to forecast from a distance the advantages and disadvantages of your good and bad qualities, to procure for you everything that may contribute to your happiness, to protect you from everything that may be opposed to it; to supply, out of my own experience, the defects of your own, and by my watchfulness to prevent your fancied security leading to effects injurious to you. The result of this calculation causes me to consent or refuse to do what you wish, according as your wishes are related to the general plan of your education; this is the reason of the strict and unceasing attention which I bestow upon all your actions, even the most trifling. You may conclude, my son, that, even when my decisions seem most opposed to your desires, I none the less share all your feelings; all of them immediately become mine; I am happy in your satisfaction and pleasures; I suffer when you suffer, I even suffer from the disappointments it is my duty to make you experience; but then I continually repeat to myself that, if you were capable of judging sensibly, you would not wish to see me yield, out of weakness, to ill-considered desires, nor, at the expense of a solid and lasting happiness, procure you a frivolous and passing pleasure. I enter into your position, and I always put myself in your place, but with the advantages which reason, fortified by reflection and experience, possesses over the feeble and deceptive knowledge of childhood. In a word, all my thoughts and actions have reference to you; they all have your happiness for their aim; I want to convince you of this, my son, and it is yourself whom I will take for judge. Compare the education which you are receiving with ordinary educations, and consider whether I have begun to fulfil my purpose.

The most generally received usage is not always the best to follow; the prudent should only adopt it when it is seen to be justified by reason. If I have rejected the usual method, if I have kept you near me, it was not until after I had carefully weighed all that was to be said in favour of or against public education. I did not think it right to leave you in the hands of strangers, nor to deprive myself of the pleasure of seeing your heart and mind developed and formed by my care and under my eyes; and in this, I have consulted your true interests more than my affection, and straightforward reason rather than the almost general example of all the heads of families. However limited my knowledge, I thought that, in the interests of that which I hold dearest in the world, I ought not to defer blindly to the knowledge of a stranger. I considered the affection, the feeling, and the instinct of a mother as superior to all the most luminous thoughts suggested by wisdom and reflection. Thus, my son, I have not allowed you to undergo that exile from the paternal house which usually lasts as long as what is termed education. I did not wish that, a stranger to your friends and unknown to your parents, you should be advanced in years before experiencing the most delightful emotions, and the powerful charm of the sacred ties whereby nature has willed to unite the members of families. I have desired to see you, brought up under my eyes, contract the habits and love of virtue and goodness, and acquire that bodily and mental health and strength without which life cannot be considered a blessing. Lastly, I have wished to accustom you to the delightful sentiments of affection and confidence, inspired by nature, cemented by the delightful familiarity of daily intercourse, in which Heaven has placed the mutual happiness of children and parents.

The great objection which I have always felt to public education is that which I have just explained to you. The zeal of a stranger, however honourable a man I may suppose him to be, and whatever the attention he may give to his pupil, cannot be compared to the attention, zeal, and feelings of a mother. What sympathy could stir another as strongly as myself, who feel happy for several days when I discover in you the germ of some virtue or honourable sentiment; I, who am alarmed and grieved beyond measure when I notice in you any inclination, the consequences of which are calculated to make me fear for your happiness, and who am then only too eager to have recourse to the superior knowledge of all those who share my friendship and esteem, in the hope of being reassured as to the dangers of your faults? Do you think, I say to one, that my son's amusements, of which his tutor frequently complains, are likely to hinder the acquisition of the knowledge which a respectable citizen ought to possess at a certain age? Do you not feel sure, I say to another, that my son will very soon lose that sort of confidence, presumption, and good opinion of himself which he sometimes seems to entertain, and which would give you exactly the opposite opinion of him if it degenerated into a habit? It seems to me that he is already sharp enough to feel how ridiculous it would be for him, at his age, to think that he is capable of guiding himself, while every step that he takes warns him of his weakness and his need of being guided by others.

But is it necessary for me to speak to you of my alarms, my consolations, my hopes, and all my feelings about you? My son, do you yourself decide between strangers and your mother. Recall to mind the means employed by your various masters to rebuke and instruct you. I shall be mistaken if you find in them the same patience, the same gentleness, the same warmth, as in the advice I give you; or if you find them as persistently endeavouring, like myself, to discover the easiest methods, equally anxious to cut short the difficult roads, equally moved by your trifling successes, equally ready to share your troubles, your satisfactions, and your pleasures. Such is the difference of feelings and their effects; the little detailed attentions which are the happiness of a mother usually become the cause of insupportable weariness to strangers. Of all those around you, your tutor is certainly the one who is most attached to you; in fact, it is a very rare thing to find, outside one's family, a friendship equal to his for you, and you ought to feel every day how difficult it will be for you to show him gratitude in proportion to your obligations to him. But, imagine for a moment that he had a son as dear to him as you are to me, and that this son were in imminent danger at the same time as yourself—which of you two do you think he would hasten to save? Not so much influenced by his duties as a father, as carried away by the impetuosity of a blind, but ever unerring feeling, he would hasten to save his own child, while you would only hear from him vain and idle regrets. Happily for you, you enjoy his affection without sharing it with anyone, and it only depends upon yourself to deserve it entirely.

When I wanted, the other day, to point out to you that you had been for some time making less progress than at school, you very inopportunely appealed to your tutor's reply. If you will reflect a little, you will see that, if you have not the opportunity of competing with your fellows, nor the frivolous renown of outstripping them, you enjoy an advantage infinitely more precious in the way in which I treat you, by admitting you to my society and amongst the number of my friends. You find yourself every day in the company of persons of merit. Every day you are in a position to profit by their conversation. By considering the esteem which they enjoy in society, you will be able to animate your courage by their example, to endeavour to imitate it by unceasing application, and to do your utmost to gain the esteem of the public, an aim infinitely nobler than that of beating a schoolfellow in a prize essay.

Since your vocation is to live in society and to fulfil the duties which it has a right to demand, what can we do better than begin this study at once, and contract, from our infancy, the habit of honourable actions? And what surer means can there be of confirming ourselves in them, than intercourse with those who have preceded us in the race, and who are already gathering the fruits of their virtues and talents? These are the models whom we must incessantly imitate and study, in order to obtain our share of the general esteem which the public always distributes fairly, and which no one can dispense with.

You were at school for a very short time, and the only thing in it that you have sometimes appeared to me to regret is its amusements. You did not remember, no doubt, that only very few games are allowed there, which are frequently more suitable to youth. Those which are most common in society are scarcely known, whereas, in your father's house, all the pleasures suitable to your age are at your disposal. I am always striving to procure them for you, and it is, perhaps, too great facility for enjoying them that makes them insipid, for you know that I never put any other obstacles in the way than those which you force me to apply.

If your father and myself were in a hurry to remove you from school, you know the reason; you know only too well that you were as unhappy there as anyone could be at your age.

A young man who is corrected in a spirit of ill-temper takes a dislike to work and his duties, and conceives an entirely false idea of them; the obedience which is required of him seems a kind of slavery; his only aspiration is to free himself from it; he becomes hardened, and a spirit of independence takes possession of his heart; soon all advice, all counsel, arouses his suspicion and becomes unbearable. Again, how is it possible to check the progress of vice in a child who is ruled by severity and fear? Parents whom he scarcely knows have no influence over him, their remonstrances are fruitless, and the passing marks of their kindness serve, as a rule, only to increase the mischief.

Everything should prove to you, my dear son, that, if I keep you with me, it is not so much in order to satisfy my affection as to work effectively for your happiness. It is my aim to remove all that is repulsive in your early studies; I am anxious to smooth all obstacles; I carefully attend to everything that might possibly put them in your way. You complained that your music-master was too strict; you noticed that he relaxed his severity when I was present; I immediately determined to be present during your lessons to judge whether your complaints were well founded, and to encourage your master to a fresh effort of patience, which your lack of application might have exhausted.

It has been almost exalted into a maxim that children ought never to be listened to or praised, so as to keep them respectful and make them feel their dependency. I blame no individual system; but, for my own part, I am not at all envious of this kind of authority; I only wish to employ my own in order to win your friendship and confidence. I do not at all desire that your obedience should be blind; I wish your heart alone to answer to me for your submission; I love to believe that by these means I better assure myself of your respect and gratitude.

I have, above all, made it my practice to speak the truth to you, and to give you, as far as is possible, a just idea of everything; I have frequently noticed the good effect of this method. Such is the advantage of the truth; it strikes the least-formed mind; it alone ought to guide us by the torch of reason, and show us the means of making ourselves useful to society and deserving of our own esteem. You will find then, my son, in the advice which I intend to give you, not so much the precepts of a mother as the advice of a friend who is anxious for your happiness, and a staunch supporter of those virtues to which it is your duty to aspire, and without which there can be no assured happiness.

Such are the principles that I have endeavoured to follow; you will have no difficulty in remembering that I have never corrected you in ill-temper. When I have found myself mistaken, I have not failed to let you know it. If I oppose your wishes, it is only after I have given you the reasons for it. You have never found me abuse your confidence; I have never attempted to force or demand it as my right; I even carry delicacy so far as to scrupulously respect your little secrets.

One of the chief objects of our attention has been to investigate, in a most searching manner, the character of those who have to share, with your father and myself, the task of making you happy. It is only after having convinced ourselves that they possess all the necessary qualifications, that we have intrusted them with those branches of your education which we were unable to attend to ourselves. Of all those to whom we have intrusted this task, your present tutor seemed to us the best adapted to carry out our views. Independently of his abilities and personal qualifications, his attachment to you, his unfailing gentleness and patience, ought (I cannot too often repeat it) to stir your heart with the liveliest gratitude.

From all that I have just told you, my son, you can judge of the motives by which my conduct has been influenced. I shall think myself sufficiently rewarded for my attention if you answer it by steady application; and, although you are hardly old enough for reflection, I flatter myself that good feeling will supply the place of it on all important occasions, and that your own conduct will contribute, more than anything else, to the happiness of my life.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to her Son.*

Your remarks upon the manner in which Madame Darty and her sister received you the other day have given me a favourable idea of the justness of your observation. The excessive praises of the one displeased you, while the frankness with which the other spoke to you seemed to you, on the other hand, a sure proof of her friendship, and caused you genuine satisfaction. I should not, however, have been very much surprised to find that you felt more flattered by the compliments of the one than by the frankness of the other; your age would have made this excusable; but your conscience, in accord with your reason, made you prefer the true and sincere advice which sympathy and friendship alone can dictate to praises which you did not deserve. Such discernment on your part convinces me that, if you had to make the choice, you would again prefer severe criticism to exaggerated compliments.

In fact, my son, what value could we attach to the approbation of those by whom we are scarcely known? And, if those who know more of us limit themselves to giving us advice and warnings, should we not be very silly to trust to senseless praises? Besides, the most ordinary reflection is enough to convince a young man that his merits can, at most, consist in a prudent employment of the time and the means which fortune offers him for the cultivation of his talents.

Your age is the age of hope; you can promise, and I like to believe, for the happiness of my life, that you promise much; but you have not yet fulfilled any of your promises; you, therefore, deserve encouragement, but you cannot claim any praise. The gardener who planted the avenue of lime-trees in the garden at Épinay does not think of praising them for the shade which they cannot yet afford; he limits himself to carefully cultivating them, and supplies them with everything necessary to strengthen and make them grow; he lops off the boughs which are likely to divert from the chief branches the juices necessary for the sap; he is able to judge, if you like, what the tree will one day become, from the beauty of the leaves; he silently flatters himself that his attention will have successful results; but he will never think of boasting of his success until, with the aid of time and cultivation, the lime-tree has become the ornament of his master's garden.

Praise is justice rendered to real merit; and we ought only to feel flattered by it when it is bestowed in such a way as to spare our modesty, is in harmony with our conscience, and is awarded to us by those who are themselves deserving of praise and capable of judging us. When you have translated some fine passages from Terence or Virgil, and have given all your application to the task, would you feel any pleasure at receiving the compliments of a person who knew nothing of Latin, or who, being destitute of taste or learning, was incapable of judging of the quality of your translation? Certainly not. We can only be ambitious of the praises of those whose verdict is enlightened and well-founded.

The habit of praising those who are present at random, while reserving blame and criticism for the absent, is one result of the depravity of our manners, of our lack of occupation, and also the immoderate taste for society, which is so necessary to the unemployed. The distractions of society have made us strangers to ourselves; to prevent us ever being in our own company, it makes us run from one circle to another, and causes us to contract that want of seriousness in our conversation with which we usually distribute praise and blame without attaching any idea to our judgments. Such a habit soon becomes fatal.

Politeness, in a tender heart, is a real, gentle, and voluntary expression of feeling, esteem, and benevolence. Flattery, on the contrary, is only an idle and coarse lie, which deceives no one. It is no longer limited, in the case of strangers, to affable manners and the courtesy due to everyone. All those whom we meet receive, to all appearance, the liveliest demonstrations of a friendship which the heart has never felt, and the friend of everybody is equally cold and indifferent to all. From an unbounded desire to please, we have become accustomed to exaggeration and praises that are a mere matter of habit. We praise, not because we are really moved by the excellence and beauty of the thing which we pretend to approve of, but in order that we may not miss the opportunity of saying something agreeable. Whether it be well placed, or uttered at the right moment, that is not what seems of importance to us. What pleasure could such contemptible politeness afford to a sensible man? If I really deserve praises, ought I not to feel wearied by those with which others injudiciously overwhelm me, and which they are ready to lavish in the same manner upon the first person who is willing to listen to them? If I deserve none, how confusing it is to receive, in this manner, reproaches under the name of praises! For is it not a reproach to my lack of merit, to praise the good qualities which I do not possess? Yet further: this mania for praising is sometimes extended in society even to the most reprehensible actions, and becomes an act of cowardice which the thoughtlessness and frivolity of our intercourse cannot excuse.

But, my son, as the wise man ought to think less of correcting society of its vices than of protecting himself from them, I hope that, conscious of the utter folly of these senseless praises, you will appreciate them at their proper value, and will know how to despise, as so many idle words, all such praises as virtue and the feeling of your conscience do not unite in justifying.

An honourable man strives to deserve praise, but does not seek it; he knows that a man is no longer worthy of it when he makes it his only aim. He who is too anxious to gain it makes confession of his weakness and lack of merit. The ancients said that envy follows virtue, as the shadow the body: this is even more true of praise; but the body must not run after the shadow. A noble action compels the admiration of all: there is no need to beg for approval. All are eager to sing the praises of virtue. The history of France tells us that Louis XII., when urged by certain malicious persons to avenge the insults which he had received from his enemies before he ascended the throne, simply replied: "The King of France was not made to avenge the insults offered to the Duc d'Orléans." These generous words, so worthy of a king, produce their effect upon all feeling hearts; but it is not your praises which make them worthy of admiration; the feeling of kindness which dictated them renders them admirable in themselves. For, if you were to learn that this incident of history is false, and that Louis XII. had not the courage to forgive his enemies, the ideas of virtue and generosity which you had attached to the action of that monarch would disappear, and your praises would no longer be anything but an idle tissue of words.

We ought to do good for our own satisfaction, not for the sake of the opinion which others may form of us; for praise, as I have told you, is only the shadow of virtue, and the shadow cannot exist without the body which produces it.

If it is right to derive moderate enjoyment from a well-merited praise, it is of the greatest importance, on the other hand, to be on our guard against flattery. Falsehood and treachery have made of it an instrument that is the more pernicious, as its springs are secret and too much in conformity with the natural inclination to presumption, which influences us all more or less. Guided by secret interest, in crooked and devious paths, the flatterer becomes dangerous in proportion as his praise is delicate and subtle. His art consists in getting as near the truth as possible, in avoiding abruptness, in applauding real merits at first, and afterwards exaggerating them; and in this manner he contrives to pass imperceptibly from truth to falsehood, and by degrees to intoxicate the man who is sufficiently foolish and narrow-minded to listen to and believe him.

Lastly, the most ordinary, and at the same time the most diabolical art of flatterers, consists in putting a favourable construction upon the worst actions, and in shamelessly confounding the ridiculous and the honourable, virtue and vice. A spendthrift will be praised for his generosity; an unbecoming and misplaced demeanour will be defined as the usage of society, freedom of manners, carelessness, and amiable folly; dissimulation will be turned into prudence, thoughtlessness will assume the varnish of an agreeable liveliness, obstinacy that of firmness. And, as the man who is most flattered is usually the most despised by his flatterers, they compensate themselves at his expense for the weariness to which their profession condemns them.

You have read in Telemachus of all the troubles caused by Protesilaus and Timocrates. They knew how to prolong the mistakes of the King of Crete by their praises; their influence rested upon his blindness. Idomeneus was hated by his people, and believed that he was loved by them. This prince confessed to Mentor that his weakness for flattery had caused him to commit acts of great injustice.

If the great are in general more exposed to the risk of being deceived, experience will teach you how essential it is for everyone who does not wish to ruin himself to contract habits of truth and virtue, which alone can protect us from the dangers of flattery.

Preserve, I entreat you, the sentiments which I am seeking to cultivate in you, and you will never be unfortunate enough to exercise the trade of flatterer. There is none more infamous; it reduces a man to lying, falsehood, and everything that can bring dishonour upon him. The remorse which is the heritage of the flatterer is not limited to the consciousness of his own faults and his cowardly designs; as he becomes, by his artifices, the instrument and author of the crime of others, he makes himself responsible for all the consequences of his seductions, which he can neither foresee nor prevent.

But, my son, it is not sufficient to be on your guard against so low and disgraceful a vice; you must further accustom yourself early to judge of each thing in a healthy spirit and without prejudice, and particularly the character and actions of those with whom we have to live, in order to render to truth, virtue, and true merit the justice that is their due. If the masterpiece of a clever artist draws from us applause, even involuntary, what rapture ought not the happy witness of an honest and virtuous action to feel? Observe how, in our theatres, the mere representation of virtue excites emotion and feeling, and learn, from the pleasure which you then share with the public, what claim it has upon our homage, and how pleasant it is to pay it the tribute it deserves.

From J. J. ROUSSEAU *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY, *on the subject of the two preceding letters.*

Madame, I have read very carefully your letters to your son; they are good, they are admirable, but they are of no use for him. Permit me to tell you so with the sincerity which I owe you. In spite of the gentleness and fervour with which you imagine you set off your advice, the tone of these letters is, generally speaking, too serious; it announces your scheme beforehand, and, as you yourself have said, if you desire it to succeed, the lad himself must have no suspicion of it. If he were twenty years of age, the letters would perhaps not be too strong, but they would still be too dry. I think that the idea of writing to him is a very happy one, and likely to form his mind and heart, but two conditions are necessary; he must be able to understand you and he must be able to answer you. These letters must be written only for him, whereas the two which you have sent me would be useful to everybody,—except him. Take my advice, keep them for a more advanced age, tell him stories, tell him fables from which he can himself draw the moral, and, above all, let him be able to apply them to himself. Avoid generalities; nothing but what is ordinary and useless is the result of putting principles in the place of facts; we must start from all that he may have observed, favourably or unfavourably. In proportion as his ideas begin to develop and you teach him to reflect and compare, suit the tone of your letters to his progress and mental faculties. But if you inform the young gentleman that you are devoting your attention to the formation of his heart and mind, that, while amusing him, you mean to show him the truth and his duties, he will be on his guard against everything you say to him; he will always think that he sees a lesson proceeding from your mouth; everything, even his top, will be an object of suspicion to him. Act in this manner, but carefully keep it a secret.

For instance, what use is it to instruct him about the duties of your position as a mother? Why should you always be dinning into his ears the words submission, duties, watchfulness, reason? At his age all that sounds alarming to him. You must make him familiar with the actions resulting from these terms; let him remain ignorant of their names until you can teach them to him by his own behaviour; and again, above all, make him feel the advantage and pleasure he has derived from them, in order to show him that an act of submission and duty is not so alarming a thing as he might imagine.

As for the second letter, if it does not contain things so entirely opposed to the object you have in view, it is at least filled with ideas and imagery that are too strong, not only for a person of the age of your son, but even for one much older. Your definition of politeness is just and delicate, but it is necessary to consider it carefully in order to appreciate all its refinement. Does he know the meaning of the words "esteem" and "benevolence"? Is he in a position to distinguish the voluntary or involuntary expression of a feeling heart? How will you be able to make him understand that the body ought not to run after the shadow, and that the shadow cannot exist without the body which produces it?

Remember, Madame, that if you present advanced and complicated ideas to children too early, they are obliged to have recourse to the definition of each word. This definition is nearly always more complicated and more vague than even the notion itself; they apply it wrongly, and only false ideas remain in their heads. The result is another inconvenience: they repeat, like parrots, high-sounding words, to which they attach no meaning; and, when they reach the age of twenty they are nothing but grown-up children or pompous dullards.

You asked me my opinion in writing, Madame; there it is. I wish you to approve of it, but it is impossible for me to give you any other. If I am not mistaken in you, you will pardon my brutal frankness, and will recommence your task with greater courage and success than ever.

LETTERS

From J. J. ROUSSEAU *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

(*Not inserted by her in her Memoirs.*)

I

Thursday morning,
Dec. 20th, 1754.

I must do what you desire, Madame. The letters shall not be sent, and, henceforth, M. le Comte de Lastic[1] may steal the butter of all the good wives of Paris, and I shall not take offence. Let us leave the Comte, then, and speak of your health, which must not be imperilled for such a trifle. I do not know what to say to you about M. Tronchin's prescriptions. Your experience makes me suspect them terribly; he has so great a reputation, that he may well be only a quack. However, I confess to you that I am of the same opinion, and I attribute the misunderstanding, if there be any, to the inconvenience arising from being so far away. In any case, I strongly approve of your determination to keep to his diet, and to leave his drugs alone; that is, in general, all the use you ought to make of medicine; but you must choose a particular diet, and keep to it. Let me hear how you and Madame d'Esclavelles are. Good-bye! Madame.

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[1] Some butter, which had been sent to Madame le Vasseur together with some other things by Mademoiselle de Cléry, had been delivered by mistake at the Comte de Lastic's, whose servants refused to return it.

II

Thursday.

You will see, Madame, from the enclosed note, that Madame de Chenonceaux would like to have the "Poem on Natural Religion" for an hour or two, and since, considering this poor woman's affliction, the smallest services are acts of humanity, I hope you will take pleasure in assisting me in this, by lending me the poem in question, which I undertake to return this evening or to-morrow morning to your servant if you will be so kind as to send it to me. I have already intimated to Madame de Chenonceaux that I did not know where to find the verses on the earthquake.

I will ask you to be good enough to reimburse M. Linant for what I owe him, until I can repay you myself, which I am afraid I cannot do on Saturday, for I do not feel in a fit state to go out.

Let me hear how you are; I beg you will do this, and accept the respectful homage of friendship and the reverence of the bear!

III

Friday.

I hear that you are still unwell, and I have to suffer your ailments and my own. If I go out to-day, I am afraid of not being able to do so to-morrow. Let me know if it is necessary, for Barré did not explain himself properly. I meant to dine with you to-morrow, according to your orders, and I intend to go to your house before anyone else's. But if you have anything urgent to say to me, I will come and see you to-day about four o'clock, or, if it is anything that can be communicated, you can let me have a message through Mademoiselle le Vasseur.

Let me hear at the same time of Mademoiselle d'Épinay. Good-bye, Madame! We are both sufferers, and I am sad. Nevertheless, when I think of you, I feel how pleasant a consolation it is to have a real friend; that is the only thing which still makes me feel any attachment to life.

IV

I have seen M. de Leyre, and we have agreed that he is to finish the present month, and to ask you to thank M. de Saint-Lambert later; moreover, I think that it is only Conti's presence that has prevented him from taking advantage of your offer, and that he will do so if you renew it.

Although my mind is made up, I shall be in an anxious frame of mind until I remove; this worries me exceedingly; I am terribly anxious to be able to settle down on Saturday week. If such haste renders expense necessary, be good enough to allow me to defray it. I shall never have spent money more cheerfully, nor with greater advantage to my peace of mind.

Let me have news of your health. I will come and see you this evening or to-morrow.

V

Thursday.

I had forgotten that I was going to dine at the Baron's to-day, and that I shall therefore be unable to go for a walk with you this afternoon.

As I must think about the means of living quietly in my solitude, I shall try to turn into money everything that is useless to me; my music is of far less use to me than my books; so that, if you are not tired of the trouble which I am giving you, I should be pleased to send you the whole of it. Choose out of it all you can get rid of for me, and I will try on my part to get rid of the rest.

I cannot tell you how pleased I am at the idea of seeing no one but yourself for the future.

VI

Saturday.

I called upon you yesterday evening; you were out; you promised to let me hear from you, but I have seen no one. This makes me feel uneasy; I beg you will relieve me. Will you be so kind as to send me the books and music belonging to me which you still have. Good-bye, Madame! I cannot say any more to you about it this morning, for I am terribly busy with my removal, which would never take place if I had more furniture, and sixty arms working for me. Let this serve as an answer to your astonishment.

VII

Thursday.

What is the meaning of this grief about a child of six years, whose character it is impossible to know? All that children do, as long as they are under the control of another, proves nothing, for one can never know who is to blame; it is when they no longer have nurses, governesses, nor tutors, that we see what nature has made them, and it is then that their real education commences. For the rest, I do not know whether you are doing right in letting your daughter go out of your sight, but I do know that, in such a case, it is important that she should not be as comfortable as with you, and I do not see how you will ever be able to make certain of that. Remember that this precaution is of importance for the future, even more so than for the present.

I pity you for being at Paris, and I think with pleasure upon the moment which is to bring you back to my neighbourhood; not that I am not very comfortable here by myself, but if there is anyone in the world whom I should like to see (next after Diderot), it is yourself. During these last few days my stomach has been very much upset; I have been so presumptuous as to live like a peasant, and I have eaten more cabbages and bacon than I ought to have done.

Mademoiselle le Vasseur is in despair at serving you so slowly, but the care of her poor niece takes up nearly all her time, and I assure you that the few moments she has to spare are employed solely on your behalf.

Good-bye! my dear and amiable friend; I wish you were here by my fireside; we could talk pleasantly together, and it seems to me that the heart would form one of the party. When you write to me, do not forget to let me hear about Papa Gauffecourt.

VIII

Friday evening.

I have sent young D'Amour, who is going to Paris, to enquire after you and Madame d'Esclavelles. I have not been well these last two days, and I have greatly benefited by it, for I have always observed that bodily ailments calm the agitations of the soul. I might require Admiral Anson's Voyages. If you knew where to get this book, would you be so kind as to borrow it for me for a fortnight, and send it to me? I believe M. d'Holbach has it, and he will surely be pleased to lend it. If you could send it to me when D'Amour returns, I should be very glad; however, it is not so absolutely necessary. Good-bye, my kind friend! I am deeply moved by your anxiety to restore my repose; the misfortune is, that no one will say as much about it to Diderot as you have said to me, and it is really very hard, on every occasion, to bear the offences of our friends as well as our own.

If you cannot find the book easily, do not trouble about it; I will try and get it from the King's Library.

IX

Sunday morning.

Madame, your letter, which I have received, afforded me real pleasure. I did not answer it, because it was itself an answer, and I did not want to give you cause to fatigue yourself by writing too much, and I felt lazy myself. As I hope to come and see you during the week, I shall soon have the consolation of finishing this conversation with you. For the rest, you know that the philosopher came to see me. M. d'Épinay did the same yesterday evening. I have two copies of the *Salve*,[1] one for him and the other for you. I send them to you before they become still dirtier with smoke; do not send me any money for them, seeing that you have forgotten to make the deduction for the coffee out of the ruffles, and I think this will be almost the equivalent. You are continually taking the waters; it seems to me that it will soon be time to change your regimen in order to regain a little strength, but

"I am only a soldier, and have only zeal," and I am well aware that my medical prescriptions ought to have no more authority than my moral treatises. Good-bye, Madame! love your poor bear a little; he knows better what he feels than what he says.

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[1] Prayer sung in honour of the Virgin Mary.

X

Sunday morning.

I am pleased to hear, my good friend, that you, as well as your mother, are better; I cannot say the same of myself. I begin to fear that I have carried my schemes beyond my strength, and, if I continue in my present state of health, I doubt whether I shall see the spring or my country again. In other respects, my mind is tolerably calm, especially now that I have seen my friend[1] again.

I wanted to go and see you to-day, but I must put it off until to-morrow; as yet, I cannot make certain of anything. I will certainly come the first moment I feel sufficiently courageous. I have not seen my threatening compatriot. I thank you for your advice, but I cannot help smiling at your alarm. Farewell till to-morrow!

XI

I am much better to-day; however, I shall not be able to see you until next week, when I will travel proudly on foot; all the pomp and show of a carriage offend my imagination, as if I had no legs to take me to you. You have told me nothing about yourself; I hope that Mademoiselle le Vasseur will bring me back good news. Good-bye, Madame!

---

[1] Diderot, who paid a visit to the Hermitage during this month (October, 1756).

XII

In spite of my impatience to get out in order to scold you, I am still obliged to keep my room in consequence of an accursed inflammation of the teeth, which drives me mad. Let me hear from you, then, since I cannot yet make my enquiries in person; but be assured that I will not fail to do so, the first day I feel easier. I hope to find you quite restored to health, and with the same manner and eyes, which so upset M. de Saint-J. and many others.

XIII

Tuesday evening.

My dear friend, I am sending to make enquiries about your health by D'Amour, who is going to Paris to offer himself for a good place, which I hope will not cause him to leave your service; and, even if this should be the case, your principles and mine are, that we must not injure anyone for our interest. I have therefore given him a testimonial in your name, such as the little time that he has been in your service admits of.

Kindly give him M. Gauffecourt's address, that he may make enquiries for me, for I feel very anxious about him. Let me hear about yourself and all that concerns you. I cannot write to you at greater length. Madame de Chenonceaux has spent the day here; she has just left by torchlight. It is late at the Hermitage, and I am going to bed. Good-bye!

I am still ignorant of the meaning of M. Grimm's twelve francs.

XIV

Tuesday evening.

Had it not been for Madame d'Houdetot, I should have been very uneasy about M. Gauffecourt, because you had promised to let me hear every day, and, up till now, I have not heard at all. Now I am reassured and consoled, because I have heard good reports of both of you. While waiting for M. Tronchin's remedies to do you good, you do not waste your time in taking them, since they are agreeable to take: that is a friendly dodge which doctors rarely think of.

Madame le Vasseur is better, and, together with her daughter, sends you her humble thanks. I am only suffering from my ordinary indisposition, which is somewhat aggravated by the winter, as is the case every year; in addition, I have been suffering terribly from the toothache during these last two days. I will keep my promise to you in case of need. I would do so, even if I had not promised. Your friendship towards me deserves this mark of confidence; but I do not need it at present, and I hope I never shall. Good-bye! my kind friend.

There are two pairs of stockings in the meantime. Kindly thank Madame d'Houdetot for her note. I needed it to reassure me as to the consequences of the excessive fatigue she endured in coming here.

XV

The Hermitage (I do not know the day of the month).

I could wish, my kind friend, that you had got rid of your inflammation as easily as I of my cold; it was a smart attack, but it left me quite suddenly, without my knowing what became of it. May Heaven, once for all, inspire your headaches with the same caprice!

I thank you—I do not remember for what. Ah! the turkey—for which, however, I do not thank you, since it was not intended for me; but I have eaten, or shall eat of it, as if it were my duty to offer thanks for it.

Your advice was quite superfluous. The echoes of my woods are discreet; as a rule, I have little to tell them, and of this little I tell them—nothing at all. Julie's name and your own are all that they know how to repeat.

I commend to your care your health, your cheerfulness, and your comedies. I beg you will pay my respects to the perfect one.[1] Embrace all your family for me, and even the "embraceable bears." I imagine that they are all such, except myself.

---

[1] Madame d'Houdetot.

I beg particularly to assure "His Tyranny"[1] of my respects.

XVI

Sunday morning.

Receive, Madame, the first fruits of your Hermitage, if what the gardener says is true. I beg you will let me hear about your health and affairs, until the festivals are over, and the roads are sufficiently dry for me to come and see you. On Tuesday I dined at Aubonne, and, on my return, I was overtaken by the rain and an illness, which have continued until to-day. Good-bye, Madame! love me as a hermit, as you loved me when a bear; otherwise, I shall leave off my frock and put on my skin again.

XVII

May 4th.

Good day, my kind friend! I hear that you are well; and, as I think that, if this were not the case, you would have told me something about it, I believe the good news. I also hear that I shall soon have the pleasure of seeing you again, and then the fine days will have completely returned, especially if it is true, as I have reason to hope, that you will come and enjoy some of those of the Hermitage. Good day, again! M. Cahouet being, in a hurry to set out again, is hurrying me, and I finish.

Bring some brandy and a bottle with a neck wide enough for nuts to go down it.

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[1] Grimm.

XVIII

Your fever makes me uneasy, for, in your weak state, you are by no means in a condition to endure it long. I suppose that, if it continues, M. Tronchin will order you some quinquina, for you must get rid of this uncomfortable visitor at any price. As for myself, I have got through my journey without accident, but at the present moment I have a violent headache.

You do not tell me whether our friend has at last made up his mind about his departure. I have the consolation of having left him in quite a fit condition to make the journey; it is only ill-intentioned persons who can dissuade him from it. Let me have an accurate report, I beg you, of you and him. I send you the note for M. Tronchin; kindly add it to the consultation, and send it to him. I ask your pardon for having forwarded it open, but I did not know its contents. Good-bye, Madame!

XIX

Thursday.

Madame, I had intended to go and see you at the beginning of this week; but the bad weather and my doubt whether you had not returned to Paris detained me, not to mention that the bear does not willingly leave the forests. I will come and dine with you to-morrow, if it does not rain during the interval, and also provided that you tell me that you will be at home, and that there will be no strangers present. Good-bye! my kind friend. I love you in my solitude, where I have nothing else to do, and where everything tells me that it is well for me to do so; but do you, in the midst of so many distractions, think a little of me?

XX

The Hermitage, Friday.

My dear friend, I am still ill and low-spirited. Philosophy is said to cure the latter complaint. For my own part, I feel that it causes it, and it did not need this discovery to make me despise it. My ailments can be endured with the help of patience; but I am only patient when walking, and, unfortunately, there is nothing but rain now. Were it not for the recollection of my friends, I should no longer know any remedy for anything; your note has recalled it to my mind, so that the benefits which I receive from you are almost the only ones that are left to me.

I shall be very glad to see La Tour the theologian; but no one but yourself, who have made me accept so many things, could make me accept my portrait in order to exchange it with yours, as being the work of a better painter, by way of compensation.

Take M. de Buchelai's book without delay, provided, however, that, considering my dilatoriness, he will leave me a reasonable time to copy it; but you must also ask him to send some paper, for I have none here. I shall be only too glad to have some copying to do at a time when I can do nothing else.

Good-bye! Madame; return without delay to La Chevrette.

XXI

Tuesday, Aug. 16*th*, 1757.

There, Madame, is some of a sick man's music; that is all there is to be said. I beg you will give this score as soon as possible to M. d'Épinay, that I may at least fulfil my obligations as far as lies in my power.

You had told me that you would return the day after the festival of Notre-Dame, that is to say, to-day. But I suspected that you would be obliged to put off your return. Let me hear of yourself and Madame d'Holbach, and tell me when you expect to be at La Chevrette. At the worst, you cannot delay longer than to-morrow week, even though you should be afterwards obliged to return to Paris. I should like to speak to you about myself; but I am as tired of always telling you the same thing, as you must be weary of hearing it. I am not as happy as poor Waldstoerchel, and, even when composing music, I still burn rapeseed oil. However, I have been better during the last few days; but I overheated myself yesterday to avoid the storm, and my pains have attacked me again to-day. Good-bye! mother to the bears; it is very wrong of you not to be here, for my snout has only just been cropped.

XXII

Thursday morning.

I am in such bad health, that I did not feel strong enough to go and see you to-day, and last night's rain had quite put the idea out of my head. However, since your friend is with you, and I do not know how long he is going to stay, if the weather improves during the day and dries up the roads a little, I will come and see you this evening; I feel too weak this morning, and the roads are too bad for me to make the attempt, after an equally bad night. To-night, then, my dear friend; you know my heart too well to suspect me of being outdone by those who love me, and whom it is so natural for me to love.

SELECT LETTERS
OF
MADAME D'ÉPINAY

I

To MONSIEUR DE LUBIÈRE.[1]

Paris, Feb. 17th, 1760.

He is not a poet, do you say? Frédéric is not a poet? Next after Voltaire, in my opinion, he is the only man who is. Establish Frédéric for a year at Paris as a simple private individual, and you will soon see if he is not a poet. The Gressets, the Lemières, Bernards, Watelets, etc., etc., are in truth only inspired by water in comparison with him. There are some pretty things in his wit? Really, I believe it; there are some pretty things Your thoughts are more favourable than your words, my friend; there are some charming, delightful, even powerful things. And how about his letter to Maréchal Keith?[2] My friend, let not a man's mistakes prevent us from doing him justice. Is it a very rare and very abominable thing that a man should make mistakes? What does that matter? Let us pity him, if we think that he errs; but let us not raise a hue and cry after our brother. Yes, he is our brother; who will dare to say that he is not proud of it? It seems to me that the lustre of such a man is bound to shed itself over the whole of mankind, and beautify it. Stay; I am getting warm. I beg your pardon, for you do not deserve to be attacked in this manner by yourself alone. I am replying to this and that person, to all that I hear in Paris or Geneva, for I have always one ear there, without reckoning my heart, which faithfully informs me of all that takes place there. For instance, it embraces my good Syndic, and my Tronchins, for I understand that they speak about me. One of my friends is at present living on his estate; he frequently writes to me; his head is no better than my own; he would like to say everything at once; the result is that he only utters a few phrases, and his whole letter is full of etc. I was near doing the same thing just now; but, one word more about Frédéric. I by no means think that his work shows the corrections of an unphilosophic mind; all I can see in it is, that he is a man who has read much. His prose is as poetical as Voltaire's, and the coarse, Teutonic blunders, which are to be found by the side of the most felicitous expressions, prove to me that the work is all his own. Since our friends are curious about me, read this gossip to them. I can hear my worthy Syndic exclaim: "Ah! the lunatic!"

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[1] One of Madame d'Épinay's friends at Geneva; he was governor of Neufchâtel, and a member of the Council of Two Hundred.

[2] A Scotch general, commonly known as *Milord Maréchal* (My Lord Marshal). He refused to recognise George I., and left England, his property being confiscated and he himself condemned to death. He entered the service of Spain, and afterwards that of Frederic II. of Prussia, who entertained a high regard for him, and appointed him governor of Neufchâtel. He was the patron of Rousseau.

but read, read, he loves me. At the end I shall remember certain expressions very delightful to my heart, which will compensate my vanity.

The translation of "Thompson's Seasons" is so badly executed, and such a burlesque, that it is not worth the trouble of being sent to you; but I have left for you at Galatin's the translation of a German poem entitled "The Death of Abel"; it made me burst into tears. There are some delightful, sublime, and touching passages, and others in bad taste. I warn you that everybody will not appreciate it; so do not say anything about it until you have formed an opinion of it yourself. That is all that deserves attention. In a week we shall have Saurin's piece.[1] Yes, certainly, I am interested in it. I have seen a good deal of Saurin since my return, and I like him very much. I shall go to see the piece to oblige him, for I have not yet set foot in a theatre. Five days ago I went to a grand concert, at which I nearly died of weariness, impatience, and disgust. My mind is made up; I will not go out again except for the sake of my friends.

The Chevalier de Valory has been very ill; neither I nor his niece have left him. This has upset my arrangements during the last three days. I do not certainly look upon them as lost—quite the contrary; but it will inform you how it is that I have been deprived of the pleasure of talking to you. Good-bye for to-day, uncle.

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[1] *Spartacus:* his first tragedy was *Aménophis*, which was unsuccessful.

II

To Mademoiselle de Valory.

La Chevrette, Sept. 10th, 1760.

My darling Jeanne, when I received your letter I had been for three weeks suffering from toothache. I cried loudly for Duchemin. He had left for England, I was told, on a secret and urgent errand; he is expected back every day. Instead of returning, he sent a message that he was dead, and this was found to be true. This aggravated my toothache to such an extent that it brought on an attack of fever on Sunday; I could no longer sleep or eat. On Monday I started for Paris, in order to beg the assistance of one Foucou, the cleverest dentist after the deceased. He pulled out my tooth, headache ensued, and my head is still painful. I am writing now for the first time. I have come here to recruit; in other respects my health is tolerable. It will be recruited by your sympathy and all your kind wishes, both in regard to it and my whole person.

However, in the midst of all my ailments, I have managed to see *Tancrède*, and to burst into tears over it; it is full of death; the princess dies as well, but it is a beautiful death. It is an affecting novelty, which carries one away with grief and applause. Mademoiselle Clairon[1] is wonderful in it; there is a certain *eh bien, mon père* . . . Ah! my dear Jeanne, never say *eh bien* to me in that tone, unless you want to kill me. If you have a lover, get rid of him to-morrow, if he is not a paladin; they are the only persons to do honour to women. If you are virtuous, they let the whole world know it; if you are not, they would cut a thousand throats rather than admit it, and they will neither eat nor drink until they *have* proved you virtuous. Nothing can be compared to Le Kain, not even he; in fact, my dear Jeanne, the whole piece is so full of beauties that one does not know what to listen to. The other day there was a stranger in the pit, who kept weeping, crying, and clapping his hands. D'Argental,[1] delighted, said to him: "Well, Monsieur, this Voltaire is a great man, is he not? What do you think of this piece?" "Monsieur, it is very nice, very nice indeed." You can imagine the reception this answer met with, and you can judge whether it is possible to live without seeing a piece which causes such pretty things to be said; we are keeping it for you for this winter; it will be soon withdrawn. Le Kain[2] and Mademoiselle Duménil[3] are going to Vienna for the wedding;[4] and when are you, my dear Jeanne, coming to Paris for our amusements? Your friends expect you, and count upon the effort of courage which you promise them.

---

[1] A famous tragic actress.

I heard, through the Comte de Puiségur, that the Baron d'Hélême had given up his journey. I have also seen the young Comtesse; she is charming; she resembles her father. She treats her husband with such affection, shyness, confidence, and study of his looks, that she puts all our young wives to shame.

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[1] Counsellor to the Parliament of Paris; he was an excellent judge of theatrical literature, and Voltaire always sent him his works, in order that he might pronounce an opinion upon them.

[2] A celebrated tragedian. [3] A famous tragic actress.

[4] The wedding of Joseph II. to Isabella of Parma.

How glad I am to hear what you tell me about the Chevalier! I think that he is keeping us very much at a distance; but, in his place, I should do the same. A forest and a room to oneself is a delightful thing; and when a Jeanne like ours is there as well, he ought to be nailed to the spot.

At last the sky is tired of flooding us; we have had most delightful weather for the last three days; a sun which dries and tinges everything; leaves which still keep vigorous; in fact, I am like the old men of Isis, I go on singing, "Let us take advantage of the fine weather which is left to us."

The minister[1] is still an inhabitant of his post-chaise; he says that he intends to write himself, and nevertheless begs me to put him at your feet. The Marquis, in his letters, is always speaking of you, and the philosopher Diderot, who is there, makes a noise because I do not say a word to you about him.

III

To MONSIEUR THE CONSEILLER TRONCHIN.

Paris, Oct. 1*st*, 1760.

Nothing is so true, my friend, as that time flies. It also seems to me that everything one would like to do slips through one's fingers, and nothing remains but disagreeableness, melancholy necessities, and trifling: this is how life is spent. You will have heard, from Lubière or the doctor, of the sudden alarm which my mother caused us, and how she transported us all here in twenty-four hours. Happily, she is now convalescent, and we hope to take refuge in the fields next Wednesday, for we shall not easily give way in the matter of the country; I had never felt so firmly established there, I had never had such hopes of remaining there until the end of December. So much for ourselves and our schemes; not a day or night passes without my planning to see Geneva again. This fancy will last me a long time. However, some one from Geneva comes to me every month; will not you, then, have your turn? I ought to have said, shall not I have your turn? I do not say a word upon the subject of my joy and your sadness; these are cases in which silence is almost a necessity, when one does not desire to be either false or insolent. Some day you will certainly come to see how all that takes place, and you will then say, in spite of yourself, in some respects misfortune is good.

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[1] Grimm.

So, then, people are in a state of intoxication, enchantment, and restlessness there? How young is that old age! What do they say of the chancellor who will no longer allow a line from him to enter Paris, considering the great affection of the said chancellor for Le Pompignan,[1] and Voltaire's great dislike to the latter? Consequently, the Czar[2] has been packed up again, and is marching back towards Geneva. You ask me about my young ones; how kind of you to give me the chance of talking about that! I have taken my daughter from the convent; she is honeycombed with faults innumerable which she has acquired there, which, however, conceal a most excellent disposition, so that this does not alarm me. You must admire my maternal moderation! I do not wish her to become perfect in a single day; her affection for me is so ingenuous and so real. My son is turning out well; he is beginning to feel a spirit of rivalry; he is gentle, and has remained a good child, while becoming better than that. I would not exchange them for any other children. That is all that I can tell you.

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[1] A well-known literary man.

[2] "Histoire de l'Empire de Russie sous Pierre le Grand," by Voltaire.

My health is improving rapidly; I shall soon be too strong. A physician whom I met the other day recommended me a bleeding by way of precaution, being greatly afraid that I might be too well. You do not mention your dear wife; we shall quarrel, my dear friend, if you have such attacks of forgetfulness; embrace her tenderly for me; tell her that I see her, that I often speak of her; and say to yourselves, both of you, that I love you with all my heart, if you are fond of telling great truths.

My dear Syndic, why do you say that the minister has too short shoes? You will not tell me that I have too wide a heart, for the people whom I love as much as yourself are few in number: speak of us always, love us well, and you will still only pay your debts.

To return to you, my dear Counsellor. If you have not the Devideuse[1] of M. de Vence's cabinet, in my opinion you are no longer worthy to have pictures; and the Rembrandt which is by the side? It is a hermit! a staircase! a window![1] and everything that it is necessary to have. Good-bye!

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[1] A workwoman who winds skeins.

IV

To MONSIEUR DE VOLTAIRE.

I see, my dear philosopher, that I should be the dupe of a false shame; and because I have committed the folly of spending my time in managing insipid and tiresome affairs, instead of giving myself the pleasure of writing to you, that is no reason at all why I should not venture to claim your friendship and indulgence. During all this time I heard your kindness towards Mademoiselle Corneille proclaimed, and I said to them, Is it really true that a philosopher, one of an accursed tribe—in fact, a regular gaol-bird—can be capable of such an action, in the eyes of the devout? They will remain with their arms crossed in the presence of so noble an example! Such people do not blush, they humble themselves under affronts, they follow the Gospel to the letter; and when they receive a slap on the face, they readily hold out the other cheek, without showing any emotion. While you are about to do good, do you not celebrate the happy arrival of the little new-born child, the son of the great Pompignan? Such an event certainly deserves to be sung of, and you owe this mark of attention to the friendship which unites you to the head of this illustrious family.

People here will have it that Luc[2] has made

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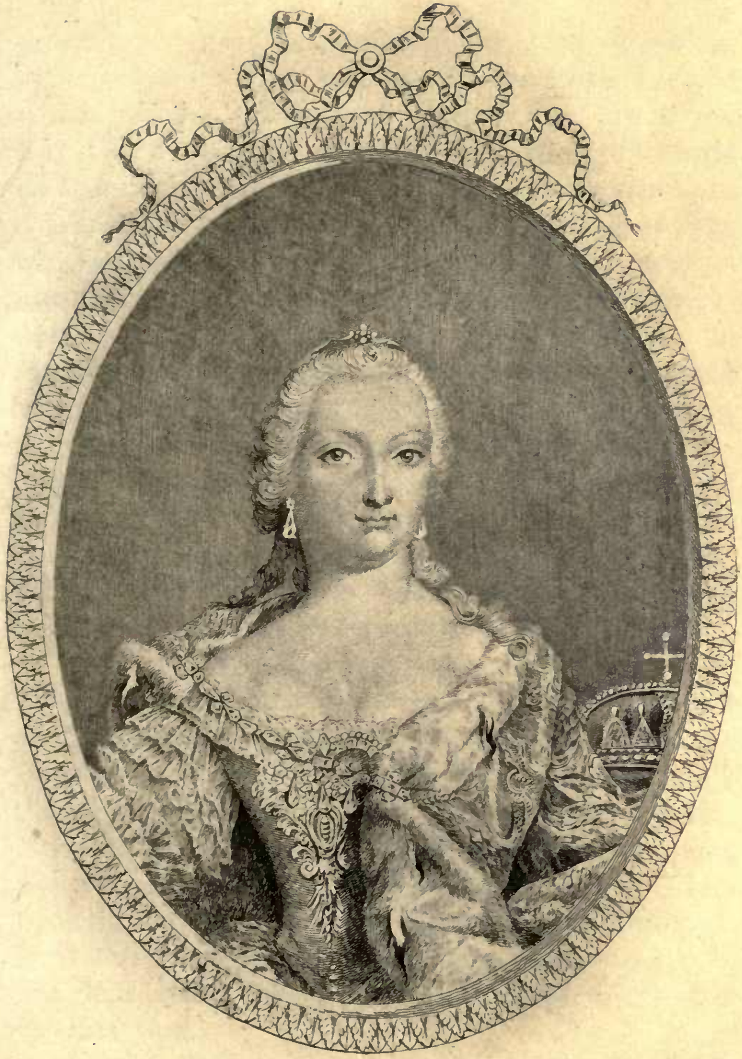
[1] Apparently describing the picture.

[2] The King of Prussia.

MARIE THÉRÈSE

ETCHED BY G. MERCIER



peace with the Queen of Hungary,[1] ourselves excepted: there are twenty letters from Leipsic which say so; we certainly deserve it. Have you heard of a book by Mirabeau,[2] entitled "Théorie de l'Impôt"? It is a regular storm: everything in it is blurred and obscure; then, the flashes of light which dazzle and upset; false calculations, correct ideas, eloquence, and nonsense; bold even to rashness — another person would have said even to insolence, and perhaps correctly — but I cannot bring myself to state truths. For the rest, a marked regard for the monks, a true and striking picture of our misfortunes, a slight outline of more or less uncertain remedies — the whole has conducted him to Vincennes,[3] where he has been since yesterday. They seem to have put him there in order to have the right of taking another. A man has never been arrested as he has been. They said to him: "Monsieur, my orders are not to hurry you: to-morrow, if you have not the time to-day." "No, Monsieur; one cannot obey the King's orders too soon: I was expecting it." And he set off with a trunk full of books and papers: everything that he does is well. His book is a quarto, and is nevertheless prohibited. It is too large to be sent by the post, otherwise, my dear philosopher, you would have received it by this time.

I have had a visit from Mademoiselle * * *, whose name I do not remember, because I never knew it. She came from Délices,[1] where she had stayed for eighteen months near you and Madame Denis; that was a genuine claim to an affectionate reception. I congratulated her upon her past happiness.

---

[1] Maria Theresa.

[2] The *father* of the more celebrated Mirabeau.

[3] The château of Vincennes was turned into a State prison by Louis XI., and remained such until 1784.

As for myself, like the Spaniard, I keep singing, to the accompaniment of my guitar, as sadly as possible, of my happy days at Geneva and my weariness of Paris; there is certainly material for a romance in the latter phrase. However, it is said that such and such things might happen, which would make life at Paris like that at Geneva, and *vice versâ*. Is it true? Do you understand me, my dear philosopher? No; but I understand myself, and it reduces itself to telling you that there will always be something wanting to my complete satisfaction in burning my incense near you and my preserver. Send me absolution without delay, my dear philosopher; my heart is full of the most thorough contrition for my offences towards you. Madame Denis, receive my homage and intercede for me. Did you know that M. Bouret[2] has lost or stolen my Czar? I still weep for his loss. Good-bye! my dear philosopher; give me your blessing.

V

To MONSIEUR DE LUBIÈRE.

Is there anyone amongst you who wants to get himself untied? untied! yes, untied. But, untie?

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[1] Les Délices was the name of Voltaire's first Swiss home.

[2] A famous financier, farmer-general, and treasurer of France, noted for his extravagance. In his younger days he wrote verses.

what? yes, untie; that is the word, simply. The following is the fact. A quack, who is said to be a great physician, pretends to be able to tell, from the pulse, all the ailments by which anyone may be attacked, their causes and their effects. This announcement is high-sounding and misleading; but it greatly simplifies matters, for it reduces all diseases to one single cause, which arises from the nerves, which intertwine and coil one over the other. When people say to him "Monsieur, I am feverish, rheumatic, consumptive, asthmatic, apoplectic," etc., etc., he replies: "All nonsense; tying up of the nerves, that is what you are suffering from." Then he lays you on a couch, runs his hands, which are said to be like a vice, over all your limbs and stretches them out again, makes you cry out loudly, then lifts you up, takes a large fee, and then you run and play at *fossette*.[1] One thing is certain, that everybody goes to be untied, and that it is a delightful thing, if those who profess to know all about it can be believed.

I thank you for the verses you have sent me, which I have duly received. Those by Voltaire are like everything he writes—divine, full of charm and grace; but I think you are too hard upon those by the Chevalier de Boufflers,[2] and particularly upon him personally. Ah! it is easy to see that I have no longer anything to do with your education; in my time you were more indulgent; well, he has the faults and attractiveness of youth. Time and experience will correct him sufficiently—more than sufficiently, and he will still

[1] Chuck-farthing. [2] A prolific writer of light literature.

have a large amount of wit and originality left. Ah! my friend, let us be tolerant, and for good reasons. Intolerance makes one sad and hard to please . . . tell me, were you never young yourself? No! Well, so much the worse for you.

I recommend you to read the third article in last month's supplement of the *Literary Gazette*. It is written by one of our friends; it borders upon the sublime, but the iron was not hot enough.

If I tell you that Frron[1] is at Fort-l'Evêque[2] for having spoken ill of Mademoiselle Clairon in his writings, it will be almost a matter of indifference to you. Assume, then, that I have said nothing, and I will not take the trouble to let you know when he comes out. I have certain points to criticize in your last letter; I intrust them to our venerable Syndic; I will content myself with sending him the text, and my idleness will benefit your society, for Hubert[3] has persuaded us all that you are very good to worry. Good-bye! When I preached indulgence, it was truly without any thought of myself. For the rest, when I cease to enrage you, you will be able to say, she no longer loves me. Ah! I sincerely hope, my dear uncle, that you will never say it.

VI

To MONSIEUR DE LUBIÈRE.

Since my last letter to you, I have had a cold, got well again, become a grandmother, lost my sight, and recovered it; that is more than enough to excuse my silence; but you know well that I never excuse myself. I go on my way quite simply, doing as much good and as little harm as I can; but I never palliate my follies, which only brings them more prominently into notice. Besides, this time, without being drawn into a precedent,[1] you have no right to complain, for you owe two answers. In the last place, I have sent you the *Ecole de la Jeunesse*. I am very curious to know what you think of this piece; it has been set to music by Duni.[2] Philidor[3] is giving us another play at the same theatre on the 28th of this month, the subject of which is taken from the novel of "Tom Jones." Everybody is on the tiptoe of expectation for the great day. Each of these authors has a considerable following and clique of supporters, so that the important interests which stir our hearts to-day are the Opéra Comique and the cafés. The cafés especially have caught on with amazing liveliness; but perhaps you do not know what a café is? Well, in a few words, it is the secret of gathering round one a large number of people without expense, without ceremony, and without restraint. Of course, only one's own friends are invited. Now, this is the way it is managed:

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[1] A bitter opponent of Voltaire and the Encyclopaedists.

[2] A royal prison in Paris. [3] A distinguished naturalist.

On the day appointed for giving a "café-party," several little tables to seat two, or three or four at most, are placed in the hall intended for the purpose; some of them are furnished with cards, counters, chess, draught, and backgammon boards, etc. etc., others with beer, wine, *orgeat*,[1] and lemonade. The mistress of the house is dressed in English fashion, in a plain short dress, a muslin apron, pointed *fichu*, and small hat. In front of her is a long table in the shape of a counter, on which there are oranges, biscuits, pamphlets, and all the public papers; the mantel-shelf is filled with various liquors; the attendants all wear white waistcoats and white caps; they are called "garçons," as in the public cafés; no strangers are admitted; the mistress of the house does not rise for anybody, every visitor takes his place where he likes, and at whatever table he pleases. The dining-room is in like manner furnished with a large number of little tables, to seat five at the most: they are numbered, and the places are drawn, in order to avoid the squabbling and ceremony which the presence of a large number of women would necessarily entail. The correct thing for supper is a fowl *au riz* on the sideboard, and a large piece of roast meat; on each little table is a single *entrée*, set off by a single side-dish. This plan seems to me to be a very good arrangement, in consequence of the great freedom which it allows the company. It is to be feared that it will not last, for the spirit of pretentiousness is already beginning to upset at its birth the economy of this admirable invention.

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[1] Or, "without its being a serious matter."

[2] A composer of dramatic music.

[3] A celebrated composer and chess-player.

But this is not all; there is an abundance of delightful accessories; there are pantomimic performances, dancing, singing, and "proverbs"—the latter had already become a favourite amusement before the establishment of cafés: a proverb is selected and an outline drawn up on the spur of the moment, the parts in which are taken by a number of persons; and when they have played their parts, the company has to guess the proverb which they have tried to represent.

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[1] A drink made from syrup of almonds.

The celebrated David Hume, the great historian of England, who is known and esteemed for his writings, has not so much talent for amusements of this kind as all our pretty women had settled that he had. He made his first appearance at Madame de T***'s; he had been cast for the part of a sultan sitting between two slaves, and employing all his eloquence to win their love. Finding them inexorable, he had to try and find out the reason of their resistance. He was placed upon a sofa between the two prettiest women in Paris; he looked at them fixedly, smote the pit of his stomach and his knees several times, and could find nothing to say to them but, "Well, young ladies; well, there you are, then? well, there you are! there you are, then?" He kept on saying this for a quarter of an hour, without being able to think of anything else. At last one of the young ladies got up and said impatiently: "Ah! I suspected as much; this man is good for nothing except to eat veal!" Since then he has been banished to the *rôle* of spectator, but is none the less fêted and flattered. The part he plays here is really amusing; unfortunately for him, or rather, for the dignity of philosophy—for, as for him, he seems to fall in with this mode of life very easily—there was no popular mania when he arrived in this country. Under these circumstances, he was looked upon as a godsend, and the effervescence of our young heads was directed towards him. All the pretty women have taken possession of him; he goes to all the smart suppers,[1] and no feast is complete without him; in a word, he is for our pleasant people what the Genevese are for me.

By-the-way, what do you say of—— ? really, I was going to mention his name, and I must not. Well, then, what do you say of a certain person, who declares that I ought to write to you more frequently than ever, because you must need something to amuse you, now that you are married? Ah! I can hear you say, in a tone of grave irony: That man only understands Paris marriages; he has scarcely an idea of those of Geneva. Gently, uncle! say that this certain person does not know your wife, and you will be right; but—no national reproaches; they are always unjust, and I do not like them at all. Believe me, men are the same everywhere; for the sake of a trifling modification, more or less, it is not worth the trouble of becoming puffed up or of humiliating others Good-night!

VII

To MONSIEUR DE LUBIÈRE.

Feb. 21st, 1767.

I have just handed to M. Tronchin the "Conversations of Belisarius," by M. de Marmontel,[2] who will forward them to M. Camp's at Lyons, that he may send them on to you, God knows how or when! You will find some fine, simple, and powerful passages in them. Belisarius is sublime until the moment when he begins to preach, but then he prates rather than instructs. He teaches all that one knows, but he teaches nothing; it is no longer Belisarius who speaks, it is Marmontel. However, I was obliged to thank him for his book: do you know what I said to him? "If I were Justinian, I would send for M. de Marmontel; for it is evident that it is you, Monsieur, who have said and thought of all these great and beautiful things." He was well pleased with my compliment, and none of all those who were there understood me, with the exception of M. de Cromelin. Do you know why? Because he would have spoken in the same way. It is one of his mannerisms.

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[1] *Soupers fins*, at which the dishes were of the daintiest.

[2] A well-known literary man, author of "Moral Tales."

For the rest, this "Belisarius," of which 3,000 copies have been very quietly sold, has been seized and prohibited, on account of its 15th chapter, which nevertheless is taken from the Fathers of the Church. "Belisarius" used to be called Marmontel's Lenten Sermon. It is now called the collection of the twenty-six misfortunes of Harlequin. I do not send you these jokes as good, but merely to keep you up to date.

While writing, I have received your kind letter. Many thanks. A thousand affectionate remembrances to all our good friends. When you go to Geneva, read this to Counsellor Tronchin, whom I embrace. Let me hear from you and your dear wife, whom I take the liberty of regarding as a friend, because I love her, and she belongs to you. A word to the Syndic, and good-bye!

Excuse this scrawl: I have no time to copy it out.

VIII

To MONSIEUR DE LUBIÈRE.

Your affairs always interest me, but they put me out of patience even more. Men do not deserve to be happy. I begin to be convinced of it; it being understood, as Strabo says, that woman is included in this panegyric, in which, as might be expected, the author makes an exception in favour of himself as well as the person to whom he is speaking. I think that we alone are worth anything, as you know. I only hear tranquillity, repose, and freedom preached by persons who, from morning till night, do everything that is necessary in order to lose the trifling amount of these which has been granted to them by his sacred majesty—Chance. I feel profoundly melancholy when I think of all the martyrs who have been made, are being made, and will be made here.

The affair of the young people of Abbeville has prevented me from sleeping: I am deeply grieved about M. de la Chalotais.[1] He is on the point of being tried, and the atmosphere of the court is not for him. It is impossible to read his memorial, written in prison by his own hand, without melting into tears. It is suppressed and forbidden, and impossible to procure. After reading this justification, it is impossible to believe him guilty; still less, when one knows the man. But, as sentences of this kind are carried out for the sake of example, it seems to me that the object in view is missed, unless the proceedings and evidence are made public. At any rate, it causes the public to look upon the verdict with suspicion, and then it is easy to perceive all the consequences. Nothing keeps up the spirit of party and fanaticism so much as mystery and secret proceedings, when one is witness of such doings and of all their consequences. One would like to flee, but it is useless to cast one's eyes over all the surface of the earth; one finds men everywhere the same, with the exception of certain modifications resulting from the climate or the character of the government; we see that the less free the government, the freer the individual; for, in order to keep up general freedom, the individual must not be free. Let us, then, remain as we are, cultivate our gardens, look after our fowls, and drink the milk of our cows, in order to lessen the sorrow we feel at the misfortunes of our fellows. Let us love our friends and be loved by them, that at least all may be well for us.

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[1] Attorney-General to the Parliament of Rennes; one of the first magistrates who figured in the expulsion of the Jesuits. When the Duc d'Aiguillon, governor of Bretagne, desired to secure the passing of an edict attacking the privileges of the province, Chalotais opposed him. He was arrested and banished.

IX

To MONSIEUR DIDEROT.

Ah, philosopher! how I reverence your astonishment, and how heartily I congratulate you upon your happy state of ignorance! What! do you seriously mean to say that you do not know whence Montaigne, La Rochefoucault, and La Bruyère have derived their gloomy maxims of morality? Do you consider them as collections of physical experiences waiting for some connecting principle? Alas! blessed is the man who does not find it, or who believes himself justified in denying its existence! No; it is neither in themselves nor in the hearts of those with whom they are specially intimate, that they have seen the wicked, the false, and the selfish. It is not from policy that they think it their duty to show the evil in preference to the good—it is in order to tell the truth; and this truth they have drawn from the knowledge of human nature and its weakness, and from the investigation of society, as it is constituted.

Yes; the man who is consistently virtuous—for there are some—can only applaud himself for having escaped circumstances; and, if one were to give chance the time to revolve, advantages and misfortunes, for changing their object, would not be any the more equitably distributed; each would have his turn. That is all.

But, lastly, you will say to me, "If man is born vicious, he is also born virtuous." May I venture to reply that he is born neither vicious nor virtuous? Many a man is born virtuous, many a man vicious; very good. He is born generally susceptible to needs, a ready imitator. I am not speaking of the savage; I do not know him, I have never seen him, and my acquaintance with the civilised man has taught me to believe nothing of what he tells me or of what I have not seen and examined myself. I say, then, that a being susceptible to needs, and a ready imitator, thrown into society as it is constituted, can only be such as he is described by La Rochefoucault, Montaigne, and La Bruyère. It is a good thing to show him such as he is: that at least ought to incline him to indulgence, and this is the only benefit that can be derived from him, for he is susceptible of modifications.

We must not bear ill-will against each other because we are what we are, nor be grieved at it, since it is a general and necessary condition. It was necessary that men should live in society: this first necessity brings all the others in its train. Our institutions can be modified as one pleases; we shall always, more or less, be what we are; governments and administrations can be changed; education can be perfected . . .

Education perfected! This pretension recalls to my mind a conversation which I had with Jean-Jacques fifteen years ago, and of which I have already spoken to you. He maintained that fathers and mothers are not made to bring up children, or children to be brought up. At that time I had no experience: I still felt the illusory enthusiasm produced by virtue in an honourable heart; accordingly, this opinion disgusted me. But now the veil is torn off, and I am sorry for it. Jean-Jacques is right, philosopher, and I conclude that you are younger than I am, although you are really a good ten years older.

X

To MONSIEUR GRIMM.

Well! I have read M. Thomas's book.[1] I confess to you that it seems to me nothing but a pompous piece of chatter, very eloquent, a trifle pedantic, and very monotonous. It contains a few affected phrases, those phrases which, when heard in society, cause it to be said of their author, for that day and the next: "He is as witty as an angel; he is charming, he is delightful." But, when I find them in a work which claims to be serious, and when I find nothing else, I find it very hard to be satisfied with it, and I say, "It is insipid." The work in question leads to no result; after reading it, one does not know what the author thinks, or whether his opinion of women differs from that generally received.

He gives, with much show of erudition, the history of celebrated women of all classes; he discusses, in a somewhat dry manner, what they owe to nature, to the institutions of society, and to education; and afterwards, when showing them as they are, he invariably attributes to nature what we clearly owe to education or training. And then, all such commonplaces as: Are they more feeling? surer friends than men? are they more this, or more that? Montaigne, he says, clearly decides the question against women, perhaps like the judge who was so afraid of being partial, that he always made a principle of deciding against his friends. Again, in another passage, he says: "Nature made them, like the flowers, in order to bloom agreeably upon the bed which saw their birth. It would, therefore, perhaps be necessary to wish for a man as a friend on important occasions; and, in order to enjoy happiness every day, one must wish for the friendship of a woman." How trivial, commonplace, and unphilosophical are all these details!

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[1] "L'Essai sur les Femmes."

He declares that women are not capable of bringing as much firmness and consistency to bear upon everyday affairs as men, nor of showing the same courage in their resolutions; this, I think, is a very erroneous view; there are a thousand examples to the contrary, some striking ones of recent date. Besides, consistency and courage in pursuit of an object might, as it seems to me, be reckoned in proportion to want of occupation, and this would be a strong argument in our favour. I have not time to work out this idea as I could wish; but fortunately this is unnecessary with you, and you can guess well enough what I mean.

M. Thomas says: "We have seen, in cases of great danger, instances of great courage in women; but it has always been when a strong passion, or an idea which powerfully stirs them, lifts them out of themselves." But, is courage anything else in the case of men? Public opinion or ambition stirs them powerfully. Introduce, in the training or education of women, the same preconceived notions of courage, and there will be found as many courageous women as men, since there are cowards amongst the latter, in spite of public opinion, and the number of courageous women is as great as that of cowardly men.

Of the general physical ailments prevalent throughout the world, it is quite certain that women have more than two-thirds as their share. It is also quite certain that they endure them with infinitely greater firmness and courage than men. They have neither preconceived opinion nor vanity to support them. Their physical constitution has even become, from their bringing up, weaker than that of men. We may, therefore, conclude that courage is a gift of nature in their case, just as in that of men, and, carrying our views further, we may argue that it is the essence of humanity in general to struggle against trouble, obstacles, and difficulties. We might even, with still greater advantage, make the same calculation in regard to moral troubles and difficulties.

In speaking of the minority of Louis XIV., the writer says: "The women of this period were all under the influence of that kind of restless agitation which is produced by the spirit of party, a spirit less at variance with their character than is generally believed." True, M. Thomas; but, since you wanted to be scientific, it was your duty to examine whether this restless disposition which they derive from nature is peculiar to them, and whether it is not equally characteristic of men. Would not men, if deprived in the same manner of serious occupations, excluded from all share in affairs, and strangers to all lofty aims, display the same restless disposition which is invisible to your eyes, by reason of the nourishment provided for it by the part which they play in society; the proof of this is, that it is nowhere so noticeable as in the case of monks and religious houses. Your work is not at all philosophical; you look at nothing on a large scale; and, once again, I do not see that you have any definite aim.

What! you dare to criticize the part of Chrysale in the *Femmes Savantes*. You say that it threw us back two hundred years! Poor man! Do you not see that this character, contrasted with learned women, at the same time attacked the two extremes: the abuse of the intellect and the abuse of simple manners and the spirit of economy?

He concludes his work with wishes for the return of virtue and morality. So be it! Most certainly the last four pages are the most agreeable in his book—the picture which he draws of woman as she ought to be; but he regards it as an idle dream.

It is quite certain that the nature and constitution of men and women are one and the same. The proof of this is, that, amongst savage nations, the women are as robust and active as the men. Thus, the weakness of our organs and constitutions is certainly due to our bringing up, and is a result of the position which has been assigned to us in society. Men and women, having the same natures and constitutions, are liable to the same errors, the same virtues, and the same vices.

The virtues which it is desired to attribute to women in general are nearly all unnatural virtues, which produce only trifling, factitious virtues, and very real vices. It would doubtless require several generations to restore us to our natural state; we might perhaps gain by it, but men would lose too much. They may congratulate themselves that we are not worse than we are, after all that they have done to change our nature by their admirable institutions. This is so evident, that it is not worth the trouble of being mentioned. It was difficult to say anything new on this subject; and in general, as you said the other day, there are no new subjects or ideas; we want nothing but new heads to enable us to look at things from different points of view. But where are they to be found? I know two, however: the Abbé Galiani and the Marquis de Croismare. The Marquis is to the nothings of society what the Abbé is to philosophy and the administration. I do not know whether women are firm and courageous, but at least I know that they are as great chatterers as philosophers; this I hope you will not dispute.

To the ABBÉ GALIANI.

Oct. 4th, 1769.

It seems that I shall never have a moment to myself! nothing but trouble, worry, etc.! Oh, what a foolish life is mine! My son-in-law has the toothache. Oh, how he suffers! He makes grimaces like one possessed. His wife has the colic. Ragot has convulsions. Rosette is barking enough to split my head. I want to write; no, I cannot; there is a visitor, a woman whom I have never seen; she has come to see the house. It is to let—my house;[1] of course, people must come to see it. This woman is a busybody, a gossip. "Madame, your servant." "Your very humble servant, Madame." "Madame, this house seems delightful. Ah! good heavens, how can you leave it? Is it yours? But perhaps you are not fond of the country?" "Excuse me, Madame; I regret . . . ." "Perhaps it is unhealthy? there is plenty of water. You seem delicate." "Madame, the house is not unhealthy, but I . . ." "Ah! Madame, there is the river, I think?" "No, Madame, it is a canal." "And the furniture? does that remain?" "Madame, you must buy the canal, and fish for the furniture every other year!"

I really spoke like that—I was so bewildered by her questions and silliness. For the rest, these domestic details, inventories, and the like—all have something so melancholy and afflicting about them, that it is all I can do to keep from crying. Everything that I have done or arranged here, or planted, appears to me better arranged and more interesting than ever. But I have not been paid; no one knows when I shall be. I have children, debts, and old servants, whom I must have money to reward. Justice requires that I should reduce myself to what is absolutely necessary, but I do not conceal from you that this reform costs me a vast effort. Oh! what a task destiny imposes upon my friends, by heaping upon my head so many vexatious, and at the same time disheartening circumstances! It is only they who, by their friendship, can arrest the progress of the gloom which gains upon me daily. You can guess what place you occupy in the very short list of my compensations.

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[1] La Briche.

It is said that the Abbé Morellet[1] is furious; he is occupied in refuting you. Several persons have seen his reply. I know nothing about it; but he is fond of you, and that reassures me in regard to the tone which is said to prevail in it. Diderot will speak to you about it. Your affairs distress me greatly; this enchanter[2] will never have finished. Monsieur de Sartine[3] has given us a censor who has allowed your book to be read to a number of rural physiognomies, and who is one himself, I can hardly doubt. I think, however, that if he were sure of it, he would not approve of it. Patience and courage, my dear Abbé! What vexes me is that I cannot help you to draw your money quickly, for I know from experience how hard it is not to have any.

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[1] The Abbé Morellet (1727-1817) was a firm supporter of the new ideas of the Encyclopaedists and economists, and wrote upon matters connected with the administration, politics, and philosophy. His best known work is "Mélanges de Littérature et de Philosophie du XIX^e Siècle." He was engaged upon a refutation of Galiani's "Dialogue sur les Blés."

[2] The publisher Merlin, who owed money to Galiani for his "Dialogue sur les Blés."

[3] Lieutenant-General of Police.

I think that, in order to indemnify myself for my ill-fortune, I shall turn schoolmistress, or, to speak more correctly, a simple dry-nurse. A little two-year-old granddaughter has come to me from the Pyrenees; she is an original little creature. She is as black as a mole; her gravity is truly Spanish, and she is as wild as a Huron.[1] She possesses the most beautiful eyes in the world, and certain natural graces; a mixture of goodness and serenity, which is very marked and peculiar at her age, pervades her whole person. I wager that she will show character; yes, I wager it. And, in order that she may preserve it, I feel a desire to take possession of this little creature. I shall be putting terrible chains upon myself. I know myself; this needs reflection, or, rather, I ought not to do it and rush blindfold into this fresh snare which my destiny has set for me; her own will not be worse for it. Well; that is a reason that decides me. Come, that is settled; to-morrow I shall take her away from her mother and take possession of her, and for once we shall see what will become of a child who is neither constrained nor checked. It will be the first example of such a thing in Paris. You may guess that I am the only person who does not frighten her: she smiles at me, Monsieur l'Abbé; think of that! And then, her name is Emilie. What a delightful name! How could I resist it?

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[1] Referring to the savage tribe that formerly lived near Lake Huron.

You advise me to believe in M. de Pignatelli's excuses; I find it very hard to accept them. I am waiting for your advice before answering him. Good-bye! good-bye! my dear Abbé. Really, I am so stupid to-day, that you may think yourself very lucky that I have not time to tell you more about it.

XII

To the same.

September 2nd, 1770.

Ah, well! I had suspected that the agreeable methods of teaching the sciences were useless for children; but, as I have the foolish habit of always distrusting my own ideas, when they are not confirmed by persons in whom I have confidence, and as, nevertheless, I have a certain inclination to be somewhat pedantic, I thought I was mistaken; but, at the present moment, my delightful Abbé, now that your sublime letter has come to set the seal upon my opinions, though the universe and all the infallibles should come and tell me the contrary, I will never abandon them. Experience itself has completed the proof for me. I have already brought up five children—my own and those of poor relations, of whom I had taken charge; none of them have succeeded except those whom I have compelled to overcome difficulties by assiduity and application. At the present moment, I am bringing up my grandchildren; I determined to act with this strictness towards them, and certainly they will have to endure it.

For the rest, your letter is superb; it is a fine text to comment upon. All these inventors of schemes and phrases are so far from the truth and the real end to which the practices they indicate are intended to lead, that, really and truly, I would willingly banish their books to the class-room to which you have banished the pamphlets of the day in your dialogues.

I am talking with you, my dear Abbé, as if you were on the spot. I tell you all that passes through my head, and even all that passes through my heart, when I tell you that I love you. Hardly a day passes on which I do not speak of you to those who are acquainted with you, and introduce you to those who are not acquainted with you; when I have no one, I speak of you all to myself. I have been much better since I have been here; the waters of Bussan have done me a great deal of good. However, I have had a slight attack of gravel, but not nearly so long or severe as the preceding ones.

I intend to go to Paris next Tuesday and to stay till Thursday, to settle your business; and by the next post I will let you have an account of what I have done.

Madame Necker[1] is at Spa, so I shall not see your letter; as for Suard's,[2] I shall surely see it, although you tell me that it was not worth reading. Nothing that concerns you, my dear Abbé, is indifferent to me. The great man and his straw chair,[1] the one carrying the other, embrace you tenderly. My daughter desires to be remembered to you; she treasures her ring, because it is antique, but especially as coming from you.

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[1] The wife of the famous finance minister, whose *salon* was one of the most sought after in Paris. Her daughter was the celebrated Madame de Staël.

[2] Suard, a well-known literary man, who translated Robertson's "Charles V." into French, and edited several newspapers, which gave such offence that he had to flee from France.

I intended to speak to you about a book by Linguet,[2] but I think it will take less time to send it to you, because there are certain things in it which will please you, and which I should represent to you clumsily or at too great length. It is a present that I am giving to you; I will hand it to Nicolaï,[3] that he may take advantage of the next opportunity.

The price of bread has gone up; it is 3 *sous* and 3 *liards*. They say that this is only the case in the capital and the suburbs; but I have the same account from the provinces. I send you an edict issued by the Parliament the day before yesterday.

Good-bye! my amiable friend; love me as usual. I will tell you the rest by the next post.

XIII

To the same.

La Briche, Oct. 29th, 1770.

No, indeed; going from ill-luck to ill-luck, as Madame Geoffrin[4] says of the unfortunate, I have never experienced anything like my adventure of last week; it is so disastrous, that I feel as if I should die with laughing. I received this morning a notice that, owing to the fault, in fact, the negligence, of my notary, I am obliged to reimburse, and that within a week, 10,000 *livres*, which I did not expect to have to pay, and towards which I have not a *sou*. I had my horses put to, and set out for Paris to find the impossible. Ten thousand francs! I got there. While the horses were being changed, I bethought myself of opening a cupboard in which I had stuffed all my stores while the workmen were repairing the house; the mice had also taken refuge there, and had made themselves so comfortable amongst the aforesaid provisions, that nothing, or practically nothing, remained of twelve pots of preserves and four loaves of sugar. I swear that that consoled me, and I ordered some mouse-traps to be set; that is what I ought to have done at first; but, as there are some books and linen still left, I must try and protect them. I got into my carriage again, and behold me starting off post haste, repeating, "Money! money!" Then one of the horses cast a shoe, and I was obliged to waste an hour at a farrier's. It was useless for me to grind my teeth and put out my tongue at the passers-by; I did not get on any the faster. At last, I finished my journey without finding any money, but having, on the contrary, lost some; for, as I think I have already told you, when I returned home I found that I had lost my purse with fifty louis in it, and a gold ring.

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[1] Grimm.

[2] Originally a lawyer, his name was struck off the lists. He was imprisoned for two years in the Bastille, after which he visited England and Switzerland. At the time of the Revolution he returned to Paris, and, having ventured to attack the National Assembly, was beheaded.

[3] A German publisher and literary man.

[4] A wealthy patroness of the learned men of Paris and elsewhere.

In vain I looked for it in all the places where I had been; it was lost beyond hope of recovery.

I returned to La Briche, exhausted with cold, fatigue, and impatience, and, on my arrival there, broke my watch. On my honour, I went to bed without any supper, for I was afraid of choking myself while eating. Tell me, Abbé, have you ever heard anything like that?

Another accident, also enough to make me die of laughing, because it will have no serious consequences, has happened to your delightful Marquis, who is suffering from a swollen face, which makes him look so comic, that I have never seen a more ridiculous swelling in my life; it is quite clear that nothing can happen to him like any one else. He informed me of his indisposition: "Come and see me," he said; "you will not find my face so straight as my reasoning powers;" and indeed he has a very strange manner of speaking on one side. I tried to persuade him, on the contrary, that his face was the faithful likeness of his conversation. Nothing is in harmony, all is prominent; but that did not take. For the rest, the plasters have worked wonders, and he declares that he will be like anyone else almost immediately: he will at least be cured.

What sublime "and so's"[1] you have sent me! It is incredible; Grimm is mad about them. I have occasion to write to Voltaire, and I want to send them to him. He is still intoxicated about your book: I wish him to avenge you for the silence of those who ought not to keep silence. I have rather neglected him; I intend to begin writing to him again, and I mean to stir him up. Do you on your part write something to me in his praise, which I will send to him. Ah! at any rate his work will last. The insults will pass away, but his words and your book will not pass away. He wrote to Grimm the other day, and said to him: "I am the worthy Job; but I have had friends to come and console me upon my dunghill who are worth more than the friends of the Arab." He goes on to say, speaking of D'Alembert and M. de Condorcet[1]: "They have told me, and I knew it without their telling me, to what an extent the ignorant[2] have let themselves loose against philosophy. Now is the time to say to the philosophers what was said to the sergeants, and what St. John said to the Christians: 'My children, love one another, for who the deuce would love you?'"

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[1] Referring to a letter (Sept. 29th) in which the word "ainsi" is frequently repeated.

During the last few days I have had the opportunity of talking to different people—some from the provinces, others from their own estates, some from the frontier, others from the interior: they all speak of nothing but famine, scarcity of provisions, and monopoly. I have put a number of questions to them, and the following is practically the result of what they have told me. There will perhaps be nothing in it that is new to you; but I prefer to tell you what is useless rather than to neglect to inform you of a fact which might interest you.

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[1] A famous mathematician, friend of D'Alembert, and an ardent supporter of the doctrines of Voltaire. As a partisan of the Girondins, he was thrown into prison, where he poisoned himself.

[2] *Les Welches:* a term frequently applied by Voltaire to the French.

This real or pretended scarcity of corn shows itself suddenly, and the remedy is always slow. In order to understand properly the monopoly of which they spoke to me, you must know that, in their province and those adjacent, the contract between the owner and the farmer is made in this manner, and in Béarn, Guyenne, and Champagne in the way I am going to tell you. The farmer pays his obligations in commodities; the farmer pays and sells the remainder of his grain in order to provide for his needs; he does not even keep enough for seed, which he has to go and procure at the nearest market in the season. As for his daily subsistence, he lives, so to say, from hand to mouth. He is so encumbered, so poor (except in Béarn) that he cannot do otherwise. Diderot has assured me that what I have been told in regard to the inhabitants of the country might, as far as his province is concerned, be extended to the greater part of the inhabitants of the town.

I am going to dictate the rest of my letter, for I do not wish to miss the post, and I am tired.

From what I have just said, you will see that all the grain from the country is in the granaries of a small number of the inhabitants of the town. This, then, is the method adopted for making the dweller in the country and a large proportion of the poorer inhabitants of the town die of starvation, and even for ruining the rich or well-to-do inhabitant, if he is greedy. Application is made to the latter, his corn is purchased at any price; in proportion as the number of purchases increases, the price goes up; it is then necessary to buy promptly and secretly. When the purchases have been made, the granaries are kept shut, and famine springs up on every side; advantage is immediately taken of the alarm, the disturbance, and the exorbitant price of commodities which tempts the greed of the rich man. Corn is exposed for sale in abundance, and offered at a price between that of the purchase price and that of the moment, which seems extremely fair; and all the corn goes back to the granaries of those who had previously sold it. Immediately, supplies become abundant again, and the corn returns to its original low price; it remains there for a moment, after which, renewed and secret purchases begin again. The granaries are shut again, and scarcity returns; after this, the same manoeuvre is repeated, in consequence of which, during the present year, in several towns, three successive famines and abundant supplies have been seen; this has led to a curious result: landowners have been ruined after having sold their corn three times in succession at a very high price; and that because it is not easy to distinguish a real from a pretended scarcity; because there are too many inconveniences that result from making a mistake; because rapid and speedy profits are too seductive, etc. All these things have been told me as facts: I do not answer for them. I do not pretend to know much about the subject; but it seems to me impossible that this manoeuvre can be repeated three times in succession; for the middle price, at which the wheat which has already been sold once has been bought back, will become too high for it to be possible that there should be plenty after the second resale, or at least the price will always be high, and people only get rid of what is superflous at a loss, not of what is necessary. Do you understand me, Abbé? Am I right or wrong? But I must stop, or I shall soon get into metaphysics.

I must give you an account of your commission. I have given one of your copies to be bound; it is to be brought to me to-morrow, and the day after to-morrow it will be in the Abbé Grimaud's library from you.

Might not the analytical essay upon wealth and taxation, of which you have spoken to me, be by the Comte de Lauraguais?[1] A book by him has come out, which I have not yet seen, and of which I have been promised a copy. He drags through the mud the economists and Panurge, not the Panurge of Rabelais, but our own;[2] he speaks of you in terms of critical praise. I should already have had a copy if it were not forbidden; but I required "protection," and in spite of that I have not yet got it. I return to Paris to-morrow; my repairs are finished, and I say good-bye to La Briche for ever without regret. It is let for nine years, without special clauses, and who knows whether I shall be alive at the end of nine years? Besides, the weather during the last week has

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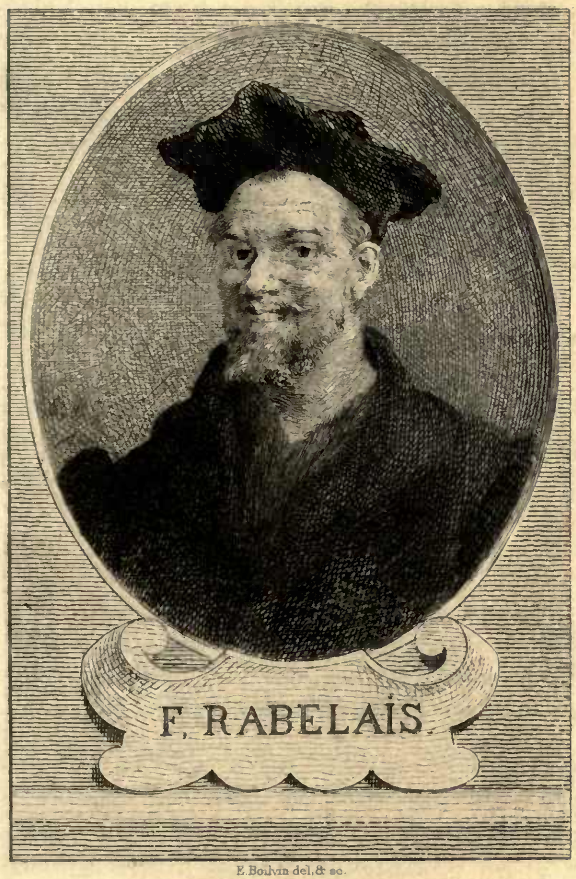
[1] Famous for his originality and wit. He devoted his attention to chemistry, anatomy, agriculture, philosophy, etc. He spent his fortune in practising the industrial arts, and found out a means of perfecting porcelain. He also introduced various reforms in theatrical matters.

[2] The Abbé Morellet.

F. RABELAIS

RABELAIS

ETCHED BY E. BOILVIN



E. Boilvin del. & sc.

been well calculated to make one leave the country without regret; continual rains, and an unbearably damp cold; but I am in good health, and when I write to you, my dear Abbé, and receive your letters, I am as happy as if I had found my 10,000 francs; as if my preserves had not been eaten; as if my horse had not lost a shoe; as if my purse had not been lost or my watch broken. After the story of my twenty-six misfortunes, the only thing wanting would be, not to have any letters from you this week. I lay the blame on Fontainebleau, and I hope to find one on my arrival to-morrow. Adieu! my dear Abbé; I embrace you!

XIV

To the same.

La Briche, Paris, on the road, wherever I can find a pen and ink; from the 3rd of November, 1770, to the 10th of the same month, when the letter leaves.

How the little Abbé is going on! one would feel inclined to call him an ephemerist, especially as, in the letter of the 13th of October, which I have just received, he is as unjust as he is noisy. What do you want of me? I write to you regularly every week, putting everything aside.[1] Where is the man or woman of Paris who would do as much? So I have been three weeks without electrifying you? That is certainly a fine piece of news! But my astonishment rather arises from the fact that some of my letters have had this surprising effect upon you. Who the deuce can have wit or imagination once a week, exactly on post day? I write and tell you all that passes through my head: I write to you because I love you, because I love to make you remember me; it is not my fault if the others do not write to you; you must not pick a quarrel with me for that. Wait a moment; they are calling me to see if my wine is well packed; I will return again directly. Here I am.

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[1] Or, "if nothing happens to prevent it."

You say that I do not reply to half your letters. It may be that I have not replied to those which I have not yet received, and which are on the way; but I have left no arrears, from August, 1769, to October 13, 1770. Remember that, when you receive my letters, they are answers to questions of six weeks back, and that I always have your letters before me when I write. For instance, at the present moment I am writing to you on a draughtboard, on which the Marquis lost a game of chess yesterday. I have my feet on an armchair, because I have no table by me. On this chair are your last three letters, keys, and bills to be paid; a bag of money, into which I unfortunately have to dip so often, that it will soon be empty; but, in spite of that, I am at my Abbé's disposal, without any distraction, because, once again, I love him with all my heart, with all my soul, and with all my strength. Ah! what a terrible row! Yes, let the cart start, let it go to the devil, and put my horses to. I said, then, in order to prove to you how exact I am, that I could not answer sooner about the repairs; my last letters speak fully of them.

I have not seen the Comte de Schomberg, he is at Fontainebleau. Diderot is at Grand-Val until the feast of Saint-Martin; because he had promised to be here, of course he was obliged to be elsewhere. The man with the straw chair—who is certainly not a man of straw—still writes more sheets than anyone. He leads the life of a galley-slave, and is none the less gay in the evening when he leaves his garret. He loves you, he sends a thousand affectionate messages to you, but unfortunately has not the time to take them to you in person. The Prince of Gotha is well; but it is an age since he has written, because he has been busily preparing to receive the Princesses of Wales and others. M. de Saint-Lambert is still very fond of you, as far as I know, because he always talks about it with the same warmth with which you are familiar. The Comtesse d'Houdetot thinks you delightful; but Panurge is a clever fellow and an admirable logician, and she is very fond of logic.

I have seen no one for a month, and have been leading a life after my own heart and manner, which has a certain inclination to savagery. I swear to you that, with the exception of three or four persons from whom it always pains me to separate, I can do without the rest as easily as possible. However, I do not shun society, but I do not need it; I only need my friends. I have read over what I have just written. It is execrable; burn it. I must start. I will continue when I arrive, but burn it all the same.

Paris, the 6th.

A hovel, a fearful noise, a cold! Ah! you have no idea of the calamities which surround me. I have already been once at Paris the other week, intending to settle there. The smell of painting drove me away from it, and, at last, here I am without mercy. The Abbé Grimaud[1] has a bound copy of the Dialogues; that is done with, let us say no more about it. Next week I will speak to you about Nicolaï[2] and Gatti,[3] and I will send a message to the person you have recommended to me that she may come and see me. You may rest assured of my zeal and carefulness.

Where, then, did you get the idea that I could not laugh at "La Bagarre"?[4] It is the most amusing, the most original, the most keen satire that has ever been written. We are all of opinion that, without prolonging it to excess, we must treat of the affair of the real hubbub, the day of the 30th May. We expect at least a chapter, signed by the philosopher, the straw chair, and your humble servant. That is our opinion and our wish.

The Comte de Lauraguais' book is enough to make one die of laughing; I am sending it to you.

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[1] The Abbé Grimaud was censor royal of *belles-lettres* and history.

[2] The secretary to the Italian Ambassador; wrongly described in a previous note.

[3] A Florentine physician, who was summoned to France by the Duc de Choiseul to practise inoculation.

[4] A parody on "L'Interêt Général de l'État" (by M. Mercier de la Rivière).

Although it criticizes you, it will amuse you immensely. As it is a small, a very small pamphlet, I should like to have it franked to you with the newspapers as far as Rome. I will see if I can find some other way of getting it delivered to you. The economists are humorously vilified in it.

Madame Geoffrin is still the same; kind, excellent, and original, as genius always is. I only see her when I meet her, as you know. She is wonderfully well. I am still unable to solve the problem why she does not like me, for I seem born to meet with her approval. I always observe quietly, never offend or outshine anyone, have no fortune or well-furnished house, am neither foolish nor all-conquering; it is very singular.

Shall I speak to you about the volume which Buffon has just written about birds?—I, an ignorant creature and a woman; it is too audacious! Never mind, I will whisper to you quite softly what I think of it. I am afraid that there is more poetry than truth in it all. To judge from his first discourse upon man, the latter is the chief and most perfect of animals.

In his discourse upon quadrupeds, one could see that he was dying to put them, if not above, at least on the level of man. Do you remember that he attributes to chance the fact that he holds the sceptre of the world? Now, in his discourse upon birds, he says that, by the help of sight, the most perfect of their senses, they, together with the quadrupeds, aided by the sense of smell, are capable of combinations far above anything that man can form. So then, the birds have over man the advantage of flying, keen sight, reproductive power, and combinations of a certain kind. Quadrupeds possess the advantages of swiftness, smell, physical strength, and combinations of a certain kind. Nothing is left to men but touch, taste, and reason. But afterwards he goes further; he says that, after having compared in each being the products of simple feeling, and investigated the causes of diversity of instinct, he finds in them more regular and less capricious results and less subject to error, than that "reason" in the only species, which thinks it possesses it. Nothing then is left to man but touch and taste. So then, the first rhinoceros, if he had cared to give himself the trouble, would have drawn more accurate conclusions as to his existence than Buffon. I do not insult him so far as to take him at his word. Besides, I can see well enough what he means; but why need he bring in poetry and make metaphysical suppositions, when only a simple statement of facts is needed? Why does he make himself the panegyrist of every species which he mentions? We are as we are. He ought to show the chain of living beings from the cold marble which is formed at the bottom of the cave to the oak which rears its head in the clouds; next, from the oak to the oyster, and, from the oyster, he ought to go through all the animals until he comes to man; to fix the boundary of each being, and not to make them encroach upon one another. If bears and vultures understood what he says, we should not be safe upon the earth.

These apparent contradictions, however, only arise from what he intended to imply, but was afraid to utter; because, when he writes, he always sees Doctor Riballier[1] at the bottom of his page, and, with that before his eyes, it is very difficult for him to write a really great and philosophical work. He is none the less a noble genius, his eloquence is lofty, yet simple and enchanting.

Since you judge my feelings by the length of my letters, my dear Abbé, it only rests with yourself to believe from this that I worship you; and, in truth, length not being considered, you will not be far wrong. Adieu! till the next post.

XV.

To the same.

Paris, Jan. 20th, 1771.

If you do not come and make peace amongst us, my dear Abbé, I do not know what will happen to us. We are tearing each other's eyes out about "the general interests of the State."[2] One says: "That is the chapter that must be copied." Another: "Not at all, it is that." "But, Messieurs, it is this; it is perfectly clear; read it, it is word for word." "That is true; read this chapter, nothing is copied, everything is imitated." "Well, then, copy the whole book." "Why not?" "And the expense?" "We must select, and only write what is necessary." "Just as you please; but your task will be a useless one." "Well, Messieurs the philosophers, argue, cut out, decide, it is your lot; I know a sure way of being right. The Abbé must let us know which are the chapters or passages in the chapters which he wants copied in the margin. It is my business to be right in what I do, and I know no other way, except to take his instructions." Let me have them quickly, my dear Abbé, if only to stop the mouths of the doctors who, because they prate about the philosophy which I practise, think that they have a right to cry a thousand times louder than myself. If they were suffering from disorders of the kidneys and the colic, as I am at the moment of writing to you, I could forgive them for crying so loudly; but they defy pain when they are perfectly well. For my part I laugh at them, even when I am suffering; I feel that this is unpardonable, and the necessary result is, that I shall be wrong during the whole year.

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[1] Syndic of the Faculty of Theology at Paris; he was an opponent of the philosophers and Jansenists, and was censor royal.

[2] "La Bagarre," referred to in the last chapter, which Galiani handed over to his friends to do as they pleased with.

Ah, ah! so you say that I have written you a delightful letter? That may well be. In fact, I have a suspicion that the letter of which you speak was good; but, nevertheless, I hope you will keep your reflections to yourself, and that you do not act like our dear *intendant* of Auvergne,[1] who, like a simpleton, has gone off to read one of my charming letters in the midst of a party at Riom. Have I no reputation to keep up at Auvergne at the present moment? I shall never be able to write to him again without thinking carefully of what I am saying. I cannot endure that; I like to chat to my friends in perfect security, and I do not wish to have a part to play. Is it pride? is it modesty? I do not know: it is perhaps both. I am very ignorant; that is the fact. My whole education has been in the direction of polite accomplishments, and I have forgotten how to use them.

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[1] M. de Monthyon.

Nothing remains to me except a slight acquaintance with these accomplishments and common sense —a thing which is rare in our days, I admit, but not worth making a display about. The reputation of a woman of wit appears to me nothing but a piece of banter invented by men, to avenge themselves for the fact that women commonly possess more agreeable mental accomplishments than themselves, inasmuch as the idea of a learned woman is nearly always associated with this epithet; and the most learned woman in the world does not and cannot possess any but the most superficial knowledge. I should very much like to discuss this point like a true pedant. Come; we will laugh afterwards, if only at what I may say. Where did I stop? Ah! superficial knowledge. I say, then, that a woman, for the very reason that she is a woman, is not capable of acquiring sufficiently extended knowledge to be useful to her fellows, and it seems to me that such is the only knowledge of which one can reasonably be proud. In order to be able to make use of our knowledge, of whatever kind, we must combine practice with theory, otherwise our ideas will be very imperfect.

How many things are there with which women are not permitted to have anything to do! Everything connected with the administration, politics, and commerce, is foreign to them, and interdicted: they neither can nor ought to interfere with them, and these are almost the only important reasons which render it possible for well-informed or learned men to be really useful to their fellows, their state, and their country. Nothing, then, is left to women but *belles-lettres*, philosophy, and the arts. In the case of *belles-lettres*, their occupations, their duties, and their weakness again prohibit them from the profound and systematic study of the ancient languages, such as Greek and Latin. Thus their share will be French, English, and Italian literature.

In regard to philosophy, as they are unable to read the ancient authors, and can only make their acquaintance through the medium of translations, which are always either feeble or unfaithful, their mental vision will be limited; and, when they desire to reason and theorise, they will be arrested at every step by their ignorance. I am not speaking here of metaphysics or geometry. The science of metaphysics is concerned with everybody, is applicable to everything, and is scarcely useful for anything. I should be inclined to say the same of geometry. Let us see then if they will gain possession of the empire of the arts, and how far they will be able to devote themselves to them. The mechanical arts cannot come into their province. In the polite accomplishments, again, I find that they are compelled to give up the idea of sculpture, even of painting. The impossibility of travelling and examining the masterpieces of foreign schools, the sense of decency which forbids the study of the nude—everything in our manners and customs is opposed to their progress. I do not think that I need speak of architecture. Thus they are reduced to music, dancing, and harmless verses; a sorry resource, the time for which is limited.

From all this we must conclude that a woman is very wrong, and only brings ridicule upon herself when she proclaims herself a learned woman or a wit, and believes herself capable of sustaining such a reputation; but, nevertheless, she is right in acquiring as much knowledge as she possibly can. She is perfectly right—when her duties as a mother, daughter, and wife are fulfilled—to devote herself to study and work, because this is a sure way to do without the assistance of others, to be free and independent, to console herself for the injustice she suffers at the hand of destiny and men, and because a woman is never more cherished or held in higher esteem by them than when she has no need of them. In any case, a woman who, in addition to wittiness and a decided character, should possess even a slight smattering of things into which she must abandon the idea of going deeply, would still be a very rare, very amiable, and highly esteemed person, provided she made no pretension to it. Good-bye! my dear Abbé; more by the next post.

XVI

To the same.

Paris, April 11th, 1771.

If I did not think that my letters would reach you at a trifling expense, my dear Abbé, I should no longer have courage to write to you, for my epistolary powers do not go beyond twenty lines by my own hand, and my head is hardly strong enough to allow me to dictate more than one or two pages. However, I must give you an account of my misfortunes. The Abbé Terray[1] has ruined me by his operations. I have neither influence nor patrons, and Heaven save me from ever making use of any to claim a crown. I am getting rid of my carriage, and selling the little plate that I have; but this will not take me far. The only thing that vexes me is, that this will not be sufficient to pay my debts, which I have contracted in consequence of my ill-health, which prevents me from economising the little which is left to me. But I will answer to you for it, that I shall not be more melancholy in consequence, and that I shall go cheerfully to the poorhouse. Now that I have told you about my private affairs, I will dictate the rest of my letter. If here and there I curse an Abbé, I must cherish another all the more. If I wanted to draw a parallel between you two, it would be sufficiently amusing. My assassin is as tall as a long pole; my comforter is only four feet high; one is as lean as a *coteret*,[1] his eyes are deep-set and fiery, his manner is scoffing, harsh, and contemptuous; the other is as fat as a pig, his eyes are starting out of his head, his manner is gentle, roguish and kind; the tall Abbé has the genius of a brigand chief, the short Abbé that of a great man; the tall Abbé has the manners, etc. . . . Some day I shall follow out this idea. I only write to you so freely because a traveller upon whom I can rely will hand you this letter, and answers for its safety. I will answer your questions and those which you would put if you knew what was going on.

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[1] Controller-General of finances.

The suppression of the *cour des aides*[2] was expected. The object of the haste displayed has been seen through, and no one believes that this object can be attained. People are deeply grieved at this want of justice, and are disgusted at the idea that the council is absolutely judge and plaintiff in one. The consternation is great; I find people less disposed to violence than desertion. Many think seriously of expatriation. Those who are tied by their position allow their sorrow to evaporate in declamations which, although they afford no remedy, are at least a relief. There is great astonishment at the exile of certain members of the *cour des aides;* anything is expected; people are afraid, but opinions remain the same because they are not under orders.

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[1] *Coterets:* the chief pieces of a tapestry frame with vertical warp.

[2] The title given to the Board of Excise before the Revolution.

As for the written documents, there is such contempt poured upon the manner in which the Chancellor is acting, that people hardly deign to read them. They are convinced beforehand that they must be full of subtlety and falsehood. Of those who have read them, some consider them clumsily written; others think that they are neither true nor false, hard to deal with, but capable of refutation; others again (and I am one of them), that the point of the question is always neglected.

There is no doubt that, since the establishment of the French monarchy, this discussion in regard to authority, or rather power, has existed between the King and the Parliament. This very indecision is part of the monarchical constitution; for, if the question is decided in favour of the King, all the consequences resulting will render him absolutely despotic. If it is decided in favour of the Parliament, the King will practically have no more authority than the King of England; thus, in one way or the other, by the decision of the question the constitution of the State is changed; whereas, if things are allowed to remain as they have been from time immemorial, where is in fact the case in which the King has not been able to make a good law, a just regulation? and where is the case in which, in spite of the resistance of the parliaments, the will of the sovereign has not prevailed, until, overpowered by the force of events and circumstances, which are quite independent of parliaments, the sovereign has himself abandoned his plans? If people had desired nothing but good, they would have remedied abuses without overthrowing the edifice; and when it is desired to make use of the materials of an edifice which is pulled down, it is necessary to pull down cautiously, not to shatter; not to mention that men ought not to be treated like stones, which are moved with cranes.

Each step aggravates the mischief. What is written will be answered. All is in keeping with the French character; everyone will want to investigate the constitution of the State; people will get excited. Theories are discussed which otherwise no one would have ventured to think of; now, that is an irreparable mischief. As I have told you, my dear Abbé, these questions are the theology of the administration. In order that they may be cleared up without danger, it is necessary that, as the result of their investigations, people should find themselves as well treated and as happy as a reasonable man can claim to be; otherwise, the knowledge acquired by the people is bound, sooner or later, to produce revolutions.

If we next examine our internal and external position, the character of the sovereigns who are or are not our allies, I think it will be admitted that a more unfavourable moment could hardly have been chosen. I should find it easy to write volumes on this subject, and to demonstrate the impossibility of a solid piece of work and all the objections to this. All these ideas were in my head; but they would have remained for ever unknown, had they not been developed in me by alarm and disgust. We must not believe that, in the present condition of the nation's enlightenment, all is said when it has been alarmed by terrible examples of the power of authority. Indignation is joined to alarm; and an enlightened mind becomes very eloquent when it is elevated by pity, terror, courage, and indignation. The taste for martyrdom is catching, and it is foolish to make it grow.

Besides, everybody, or nearly everybody, hopes that it will all come to nothing. But, if it should be decided that the constitution of the State ought to be changed, I can see that the absolute power of the Parliament would be preferred, because it is tied down to forms with which the absolute monarch can dispense. I find it hard to believe that, if this continues, the national character can avoid becoming deteriorated by it.

Such, my dear Abbé, are my ideas, which I beg you will keep to yourself, at least, until my master has finished my complete bankruptcy; for then I intend to have myself put into the Bastille, seeing that I shall have no other means of existing except at his expense.

XVII

To the same.

October 5th, 1771.

Well! you have not had a word from me last week; the reason is that I have had no letters from you, that I have had none from London, and that I have been out of temper. I have made unwearying search, and I have found no letter of the last week, and no news of the three preceding weeks! Have you written to me or not? Really, my dear Abbé, I do not know what to think; it makes me very uneasy. However, let us leave my impatience and uneasiness till further orders; but most certainly, if I do not receive a letter this week, I shall not write again until my correspondence is restored to a sure footing.

Good heavens! what a beautiful and sublime letter was that which you wrote to me upon "Curiosity"! how clear and profound! However, I am not convinced that civilized animals are free from curiosity. My dear Abbé, I assure you that my dog is curious; I have studied him carefully, and not for the first time to-day. When a carriage stops at my door, when he hears the porter's whistle, he jumps from my knees to the ground, squats before the door, and looks fixedly at the person entering. When, on the contrary, he hears a whistle in the street, he goes to the window; but he growls and barks. His meal-times are never preceded by a whistle, however, and those who come to see me never give him anything to eat. . . . Curiosity in men arises from different motives, but, however modified they may be—as they always are infinitely—they can always be brought back to a point common to all animals, reasoning and unreasoning alike, namely, interest. Physical, like moral interest, implies attention; you cannot deny that the dog gives attention to the orders and wishes of his master, to the wishes of the master who does not beat him as well as to those of the one who does. I have never beaten my dog; on the contrary, I spoil him out of curiosity, for instance, to see what is the difference between a dog thoroughly spoilt by his mistress, and a woman completely subdued by destiny. Well! he listens to me, and tries to understand me; sometimes my wishes astonish him, but he shows no symptoms of fear. You will admit that this attention, this astonishment strongly resembles curiosity, and leads to it directly. My dear Abbé, dream of it still; if you persist, I shall be tempted to believe that it is I who am mistaken, but consider it closely, I beg of you. I am quite like yourself, with the exception of sublimity. I have no time to explain myself further.

There are no new books that deserve your attention; but a little pamphlet has appeared upon the exhibition of pictures at the Louvre, which is very amusing. It is brought out under the signature of Raphaël the younger, who is supposed to be writing to one of his friends at Rome.

The idea of this pamphlet is very amusing. The Swiss, who takes care of the pictures, hears a loud noise in the *salon* during the night; he runs up, and finds that the pictures are conversing and telling truths to one another. He calls his nephew, who knows how to write, and he takes down their conversation and dispute; it is this quarrel which has been published. The criticism is severe, but it seems to me fairly impartial; no one is spared. It is a pity that the pamphlet is not as well written as it is pleasantly conceived. The author is unknown; but there is reason to believe that it is the work of some artist who is more used to the pencil than to the pen. He has not even spared the idle painters who have exhibited nothing in the *salon*. One of the pictures calls over the absent. "M. Doyen?" The others reply: "He is at court." "At court! and what the deuce is he doing there?" "The King has spoken to him; did he not tell you?" "I did not know it; I am very glad; he is a man of merit, and will do honour to his patronage." "Dumont the Roman?" "He is at matins." "He has done well; all these little nakednesses would have scandalised him." "Madame Vien?" "She is certainly with her husband." "Madame Terbouche?" "Far away, far away!" "M. Fragonard?" "He is wasting his time and talents; he is making money." "M. Greuze?" "He is sulking." "I am sorry for it; we should have had the pleasure of repeating the praises which he lavishes upon himself," etc. The whole dialogue is in this style, and is very amusing.

Good-bye! my dear Abbé! Think seriously of letting us hear from you, and let me know whether those four letters have been lost, or whether they have not been written. I have not yet had any this week; but, as I only receive them on Sunday, I am not yet impatient.

XVIII

To the same.

Paris, October 13th, 1771.

When I send you beautiful dissertations, beautiful discourses and good stories, you say that I say nothing; now, my dear Abbé, I am going to tell you some nothings in order that you may believe that I am telling you something. What a treasure! five letters from you at once; it seems as if Messieurs the ambassadors had kept them carefully in their pockets, apparently believing that letters, like pears, are best in the pocket. What is certain is, that it is not the fault of M. de Magaillon,[1] who has taken every precaution to prevent this happening. At last he has sent them to me; here they are upon my desk, and I will reply to them carefully, number by number, in the order in which they arrived.

No. 62. You say that, when I am unable to write, I ought to make the Marquis, the straw chair, or the philosopher work. That is a very good idea—all of them good for nothing! Did you have to think long to find that out? The Marquis has written to you once; you have seen how he gets out of it; besides, he is blind. The straw chair is tearing about England like a madman, and he will come and tell you directly all that he has not leisure to write. The philosopher is still under the spell, and it is said that there is neither pen, nor ink, nor paper there. From time to time I manage to extract from him one of his sublime reveries; I send them to you; that is all that we can get out of him. But never mind; in future I will get my daughter to write, for she declares that, since you have taught her to pay compliments, she is as witty as an angel; it will be to us, the poor and hard-working, that you will write, not to your rich and idle friends who have not time to tell you that they love you: don't doubt it. But it is a great truth, that only hard workers who are much occupied can find time for everything, because they are obliged to be regular. Now let us pass on to No. 63.

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[1] He took charge of the Abbé's letters in the absence of Nicolaï.

Condolences upon my domestic misfortunes! I thank you for them, my dear Abbé. Ah, well! I have no longer a carriage; perhaps I shall be obliged to cut down my expenses still further; but I have some friends who sympathise with me like yourself. Those who are acquainted with the details of my position approve of my action, and agree that I have done the best thing possible. I have made the sacrifice for the sake of my children's comfort, while risking the loss of my own. Public affairs unfortunately carry me along without any advantage to them;[1] but it is none the less true that I have not even to reproach myself with imprudence; that is a great point.

No. 64. M. Grimm will tell you (but he will not write to you) all that he thinks of England. To judge from what he writes to me, he is delighted with it, and greatly regrets that he cannot make a longer stay there.

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[1] *i.e.*, my children.

What folly, not to want to send me Piccini's opera, because I do not know the language of Naples! Could I not get someone to explain what I do not understand? Besides, it is the author's manner which I wish to study. Have you forgotten that I know something about harmony and composition, and that I want to study the good composers? Send it to me, then, my dear Abbé, and do not make so much difficulty about it; for, however little you may write to me on this subject, and await my answer, this work will reach Paris, and it will not be you who have sent it to me.

No 67. I thank you for all your polite messages from M. de Magaillon. Tell him from me, since you intrust each other with our mutual declarations, that I find only one fault in him; that is, that we do not see him often enough. But, my dear Abbé, where did you get the idea that he is trying to stir up a quarrel between us? It is certainly not he who accused you of saying that I no longer loved you; it was you yourself who wrote it with your own hand. I have read it with my own eyes; but I did not believe it. I know perfectly well that you do not believe it either. That is just like you; you never know a word of what you write. You attack me frightfully, in No. 69, for having sent you a parcel of your books, for having added some copies of the Dialogues; while you wrote me three letters in succession in the month of July to get together all that Nicolaï and myself had to send you, to pack them up as soon as possible, and to send them addressed to M. de Medina at Marseilles, as you were dying of impatience to be in possession of all these collections of travels. In the same letter you add: I should not be sorry to have another twenty copies of my Dialogues; if you have any left you can send them to me. Nothing more is wanting, except that you should have forgotten to write to M. de Medina, to tell him how you wish him to forward you the box, and should then lay the blame of it upon me, to whom you gave no instructions in the matter.

Ah! what a pretty expression at the end of No. 67! Believe in ghosts! I am giving all the latitude to it that my heart desires; but when and how?

I think that all you say about the trial of the diamonds[1] is very fine. I will tell Diderot of it, but I like just as well to speak to you about other things.

What do you want me to tell you about Paris? There is nobody here. I do not want to talk about politics; the theatre does not interest you; deaths, marriages, etc., can be seen in the *Gazette*. What do you want to know? That the Baron and his wife are still at Grand-Val? that the Helvetiuses and the Neckers are away? They bought, last year, M. Laborde's house at Saint-Ouen, and they are living there now. Madame Geoffrin is well; her dinners and suppers are the same as usual. Your efforts are useless. I will tell you as a last item that M. de

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[1] Referring to some experiments made by a chemist named Rouelle.

Sartine supped with me yesterday, together with M. le Marquis de Mora, M. de Magaillon, and the Marquis de Croismare. We spoke of you, read some passages from your letters, and regretted your absence. Read these last lines once or twice a week, and you will know what is going on at my house.

XIX

To the same.

Paris, Oct. 19*th*, 1771.

Alas! my dear Abbé, I am very low-spirited to-day; it is raining, and I have not yet received any letters this week, because they have to be sent to me from Fontainebleau. How can one have any common sense when that is so? There is not a creature in Paris; I see no one but my daughter and my grandchildren, and then my grandchildren and my daughter. We sing mournfully in a minor key, and then we reason. When we happen to talk nonsense, we are delighted, because it makes us laugh for a moment. For instance, my daughter, Madame de la Live, one of her young friends, Mademoiselle de Givry, and myself, dined the other day at Sannois, at Madame d'Houdetot's. On our return, I suddenly felt a bundle tumble on to my legs from the carriage-box. I tried to make out, by kicking it with my foot, what it might be. No sooner had I put my foot on it than a pitiful cry issued from it, and then gradually died away.

We all cried out, "What is it? It is a dog! It is a child! Let us stop! let us stop!" and were ready to die with laughing. We stopped, got down, and looked. It was a bundle of dirty linen, into which, for some unknown reason, an inflated bladder had been put, and, in treading upon it, I had burst it. There we were, all four of us, on the high-road, splitting our sides with laughter. We got into the carriage again, giving utterance to some profound reflections upon this miserable incident, when suddenly we asked ourselves: Suppose it had been a child, what should we have done? With one accord, we should all four have adopted it, brought it up, and given it a name; and what name? one made up of one syllable from each of our own names; that would have made the Chevalier de Gilabeldé! a very happy idea! In short, we drew up the story of his whole life, and we were terribly grieved because the parcel only contained some dirty linen, instead of a child. Ah! Monsieur Abbé, if you have one left in some corner, which you do not know what to do with, get it put into our carriage, the first time we go into the country; you will truly do us a real service. If you have none, I order you to get one, but make a good choice; send us a little budding genius; in a word, let him be like you, and we shall make something of him. But let us leave off joking, and talk seriously.

For want of anything new to tell you, I will go back to the past, and I maintain that animals are curious. Twenty instances have recurred to my mind since my last letter. For instance, why, in the month of October, when they are hunting larks with a mirror with facets, do the birds come from a distance of two leagues round when the sun is shining upon it, and darting fire in all directions? The sportsmen fire across the swarm; the birds which are not killed at once retreat and return the next moment, turn and turn round again, and some of them refuse to move, even when the gun is fired. You will perhaps tell me that it is the heat that attracts them; by no means; for in the months of November and December, when they roam about the country just as much, it is useless to try this kind of sport again; they say that they are not attracted at all. This fact has been confirmed to me by several sportsmen. Why does the cat, the most mistrustful of animals, so cautiously approach an object which it does not know? It turns it over and examines it; fear and a sense of uneasiness would incline it to flee; curiosity alone causes it to approach and induces it to examine the object in question. I await impatiently your answer to these objections.

Although you say that my letters are a complete Encyclopaedia, I cannot help mentioning to you a little book of no value, entitled "Elements of the General System of the Universe," by M. de Lazniez. But console yourself; I will begin my extract with a story.

The late Abbé de Bragelogne, of the Academy of Sciences, a good geometrician and a very devout person, one day wrote a little catechism for the use of his fellows; he took one to a sitting, and, holding it in his hand, said to the Academicians:

"Messieurs, you all wish to be saved, I do not doubt; well, you need only believe the contents of this little book. Look, Messieurs, it is a very little matter. Is it not handy to have all your religion in a corner of your pocket like a *colombat*[1]?"

Diderot told me this story. Well, M. Lazniez, formerly inspector of studies and pupils at the military school, explaining the system of the universe, at present in a garret at Lunêville, might present himself before the Academy, with his little book in his hand, and say, like the Abbê de Bragelogne: "Messieurs, here is all that tormented Descartes and Newton for so long; that with which the head of the mighty architect was pregnant for a vast number of ages, I have included in these four sheets; read these four sheets and go and rest your weary heads on their pillow. Is it not very handy to have the key of your universe, in a corner of your pocket like a master-key of your wardrobe?"

This little book does not seem to be the work of a fool or a madman, but of a man whose knowledge is not proportionate to his attempt. It also appears to me full of contradictions; perhaps I may be mistaken; but, to give an instance, he admits homogeneous matter, and yet regards each molecule of it as animated by a tendency in every direction; he assumes the birth of the movement of these tendencies in every direction, and yet he believes the universe to be infinite; two contradictory hypotheses, which would certainly establish in the mass an equilibrium which could not possibly be destroyed. In his opinion, void and space are nothing at all; and yet he divides all matter into little spheres, without asking himself what is the infinite multitude of little spaces formed by the contact of this sphere, etc. M. Lazniez next applies his principles to all the minute effects which take place under our eyes. It is the dream of a man of ability, which is often obscure, because it is impossible for a philosophical and metaphysical dream to be otherwise.

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[1] Small almanacks, so called from the bookseller Colombat, as we talk of a "Whitaker."

It only remains for me to say a word about your machines for carding mattresses;[1] they are quite ready, and I am waiting for your final instructions to send them off. I embrace you, and pray God to grant you His holy protection.

XX

To the same.

January, 1772.

So as to begin by putting you in a good humour, I send you a new song set to an old air. I advise you to read and sing it; it will make you cheerful; my letter will seem better to you for it.

Well, you say that "ideas are not the consequences of reasoning, that they precede it, and follow the sensations; that we prove by reasoning that a stick does not bend in the water, and that nevertheless the idea we have of it shows it to us as bent, because the sensation of the eye has so informed us; and that the idea follows the sense of sight?" This is really wonderfully in harmony with what you say above, that, whenever the human mind is unable to form for itself the idea of anything, proof cannot change into persuasion. We shall therefore prove that many a thing which we do not understand is thus, and we shall always act as if it were not thus. Do you know that that proves more than you think? You show why so many men ruin themselves for opera girls, who deceive them while swearing an eternal fidelity in which they believe, although the contrary is proved to them. That is the case with all truths.

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[1] Galiani had complained of the hardness of the Neapolitan mattresses, because the wool of them was beaten without being carded.

I have shown your letter to the philosopher, who jumped about enough to make anyone die with laughing. His wig never travelled so much about his head as during the reading of this letter. He declares, however, that punishments and rewards are works of supererogation; that we must only stifle bad specimens for the sake of example, because man is susceptible of modifications. I, who know nothing about business, declare that it is just because he is susceptible of modifications that punishments and rewards are necessary. I shall never think of beating or crushing the stone which may have hurt my legs while rolling by my side; it would be useless for me to reduce it to powder; I should not on that account be protected against the next stone thrown in the same direction. But, if I give a good blow with my fist to the man who strikes me as he passes in the street, if the pain which he feels is sufficiently severe for him to remember it, he will not strike me when he meets me again. However, this does not mean that the philosopher did not say some very fine things about all this, of which I do not remember a single word. Besides, when things have once been considered, what is the use of returning to them, unless there is something new or sublime to add? And this only belongs to you, my dear Abbé; let us therefore speak of other things.

All that you tell me about the doctor is excellent and describes him admirably; but you must seriously think about what I have told you. Give him my affectionate compliments. Then you must try and write your book, of which you have given me so delightful an extract. Can it be possible that, when a man is endowed with a genius like yours, under any government whatever, he should be confined to drawing up police regulations? If I were supreme and you were my subject, I would give you a salary of 600,000 francs, on condition that you said and wrote everything that occurred to you; these would be the only conditions attached. You see that I should be a despot like anyone else.

Do not be uneasy about my health if I do not write to you myself. I am no worse than usual; but my eyes are bad, and Tronchin has forbidden me to do anything. Good-bye! my dear Abbé. I have not heard from you this week; this is a bad way of beginning the year.

XXI

To the same.

June 26th, 1773.

It is really too bad of you to remind me that our correspondence will be printed when we are dead. I was quite aware of it, but I had forgotten. So, for the present, I no longer know what to say to you. The idea of immortality inspires me with a terrible alarm. For the rest, my dear Abbé, you know that rest is a rule of the beautiful; and, as my letters will be mixed with yours, that will make, on the whole, a perfect collection.

You believe that the Chevalier de Chastellux will communicate his reflections to me; but where shall I see him? for he never comes to my house, and I never call on other people. I wish I could believe in the speedy return of M. the Prince de Pignatelli; but I think that you are deceiving me, for it seems to me that I have heard it said that he had sent a message to his wife that he would spend the winter at Naples. As it is possible that he may wish to give her an agreeable surprise, I will not mention what you say about his return.

I have forwarded your *valet-de-chambre's* parcel to M. Saint-George at the College of Rheims. I think I have sent it to you in time; but, as M. the

Ambassador of Naples only sends the letters for me which are addressed to him eight or ten days after he has received them, it is possible that you have not yet received that in which I informed you of the receipt and sending of the parcel. For instance, I only received the last which was intrusted to him on Wednesday last; to judge by the date, he had been carrying it about in his pocket for a week.

We have not yet heard directly from the philosopher. From a letter of the Prince de Gallitzin to Madame Geoffrin, we only know that he reached the Hague in good health; that he has been at Leyden, where he made acquaintance with all the professors; that the Prince cannot get him away from them, and that it is really doubtful whether he will go to Russia. He is madly in love with all these Dutch doctors. He will perhaps spend the rest of his life there: who knows?

I welcome your affection, your insults, and your excuses, my dear Abbé. Everything that comes from you is precious to me: be sure of that. Doubtless history will speak of our friendship; you may feel sure of that, since it speaks of men's misfortunes. Can there be a greater one than to be separated from those we love?

XXII

To the same.

Feb. 27th, 1774.

You are quite right, my sublime and charming Abbé; the correspondence of Harlequin and Ganganelli[1] would make a unique work; but whatever put it into your head that Marmontel should execute it? I shall take care not to say a word about it to him, for it would be a work spoiled. There are only two men in the world capable of carrying out such an undertaking with success, yourself before all, or Grimm, after he has been to Italy; for, in order to give this work the degree of truth and originality which it ought to possess, it is necessary to have been on the spot, to have seen the Italian monks; it is necessary to be able not to describe servilely what one has seen, but what one has seen must produce similar turns of mind. No one understands better than he does these imitative turns which give such an air of truth. I also understand it myself; but I am too ignorant to have sufficiently true ideas to put the mind on one side, and, as you say, it is not necessary. All things considered, my dear Abbé, take your courage in both hands and write the romance. I condemn you to do so. It is absolutely necessary. You see clearly that you alone can carry out so beautiful, so sublime, so profound a scheme. It is a matter of a month: why wait, then? Come, is it begun? Dictate to me, I will write. Stay, do better still; each post, instead of writing to me, send me a letter from Ganganelli, and I will send you back an answer from Harlequin; it will be either good or bad. You will correct it if it is almost good, or rewrite it if it is almost bad. You will add to it the sacramental terms, the sayings of the country; this will give our correspondence a very comic tone, which will certainly catch the curious.

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[1] Pope Ganganelli (Clement XIV.) was of low birth; it is said that his father sold quack drugs, and was an intimate friend of the father of Carlin, who took the part of Harlequin at the *Comédie Italienne*.

XXIII

To the same.

Paris, Feb. 20th, 1777.

Ah! I can hear you scolding me from here; but, truly, my dear Abbé, it is not my fault; and, if I have not written, it is because I have not been able to do so. I have had the colic and toothache; accounts to get out of the hands of a lonely widow, who had only time to weep, and could find none to let me have my money; Dialogues to write; a moral catechism which I have taken in hand, a piece by one of my friends which has failed, and must be set on its legs again—how can I tell? And all this from the depths of my armchair, from which I never budge. And then, time goes on without warning; one Sund aydoes not wait for another; one does not know what to do. In short, there I am. I will tell you a story, andthen we will see.

M. the Lieutenant of Police was invited to a grand ceremonial dinner, a corporation meal. It was a question of having a new wig; he ordered one. The day arrived, but not the wig. A *valet-de-chambre* was sent for it. The wig-maker made a thousand excuses; his wife had been brought to bed two days before, the child had died the previous day, and his wife was still very ill; it was therefore not surprising that, in his trouble and embarrassment, he had forgotten to send the wig to my lord. "But," said he, "here it is in this box; you will see that I have taken great pains with it." The box was opened with great care, so as not to spoil the wig, and inside was—the child that had died the day before! "Good God!" cried the wig-maker, "the priests have made a mistake; they have buried the wig." It required an order from the archbishop, a written report, a decree of the Council, and I do not know what else, to inter the child and disinter the wig.

There has also been a very amusing suit between the Marquise de Saint-Vincent and a tailor, whom she had ordered to make a pair of breeches for a certain Abbé, for which she now refuses to pay; but the details of this rather insipid affair would be too long to relate in full.

What else shall I tell you, to keep you up to date? It had been decided to make the Military School a seminary for the chaplains of the regiment, and these almonries were intended for ex-Jesuits. The Parliament and a foreign minister have remonstrated; their remonstrances have been listened to, and the scheme will not be carried out, to the great regret of M. de Saint-Germain, who hoped in the future to see all the troops, under the guidance of such chaplains, lead an exemplary life.

How are your teeth, my dear Abbé? Mine will neither come out nor stay where they are; they confine themselves to aching enough to drive me mad. Is it not possible to bring them to reason? Has each part of our body, then, a will and a power? Do you understand anything about it? Ah! I beg of you, tell me.

Good-bye! my dear Abbé. Rest assured, I love you always—always; but where can I find the time to tell you?

XXIV

To the same.

Paris, May 3rd, 1778.

I hope that my letter will find you on your return to Naples, my delightful Abbé. I have received your bill of exchange, and I am sending to the banker's. As soon as I have received the sixty francs, I will let you know.

I think M. de Clermont sublime to refuse to salute you, because you have given your opinion against his *protégé*. I was well acquainted with his mind, but I did not believe he was so profound a politician; this is not perhaps found in your excellent treatise Amico Politico, of which you one day gave us so delightful an abstract; but you are wrong; *ergo*, M. de Clermont is deeper than you, that seems clear to me.

What seems to me clearer still is, that the human race is not allowed to be happy and tranquil, since even you, my dear Abbé, have domestic troubles which upset your health, make you run about the country, disturb your rest and peace of mind. What, then, is it that can torment you to such an extent? Is it the mortality amongst your cats? love or jealousy amongst your servants, male or female? Ah! what does it matter whether the cause is serious or frivolous? it is the effect upon your soul that must be considered. The man who is only unhappy because he is only surrounded by desires that are too readily satisfied suffers none the less. Relieve me of my anxiety, and let me hear that all is going on as well as possible. That, indeed, is all that is wanted to make reasonable persons happy.

How you have pleased me by giving me such good news of our dear Gatti! I have always been fond of him, and take a lively interest in his happiness. I have some grandchildren who would make him very happy. My little Emilie, who is a delightful child, would turn his head. Tell him again that, if he ever visits this country, and I give him a detailed account of all that has happened to me during the last five years, he will believe more firmly than ever in the miracles of Nature, for Tronchin has done nothing but assist her in a small way, when she had clearly announced her intentions.

Voltaire has bought a house not far from me, where he is going to settle in the month of September. His niece is rather seriously ill. This has caused him to abandon the idea of going to spend two months at Ferney. He talks of a journey of 120 leagues as of a trip to Chaillot. He still shares with Franklin[1] the applause and acclamations of the public. When they appear at the theatre, in the public walks, in the academies, there is no end to the shouts and clapping of hands. When princes put in an appearance, nothing is heard of them; when Voltaire sneezes, Franklin says God bless you; and so it begins again. The following Latin verse has been written to be inscribed at the bottom of the latter's portrait:

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[1] He had been sent on a diplomatic mission to Paris, where he created a great sensation.

Eripuit caelo fulmen, sceptrumque tyrannis.

Would you like to have the verse translation which D'Alembert made of this the other day when he awoke?

Tu vois le sage courageux,
Dont l'heureux et mâle génie
A ravi le tonnerre aux cieux
Et le sceptre à la tyrannie.

Since I am dropping into poetry, here are some other lines upon the compliment which the Emperor paid the Elector of Bavaria when he sent him the fleece:

Prenez, pauvre électeur, et prenez avec joie
  La toison que fort à propos
L'Empereur enfin vous envoie,
  Quand il vous a mangé la laine sur le dos.

Here I check my poetic vein; otherwise you might take my letter for an extract from the *Mercure de France.*

As to opium: I am beginning to do without it for a day, so as not to exhaust myself with this delightful remedy. General Koch has arrived; he does not interrupt me, but bids me embrace you for him. Gleichen leaves on Wednesday; we shall speak of you again, and I will tell you about that or something else on the earliest occasion.

END OF VOL. III

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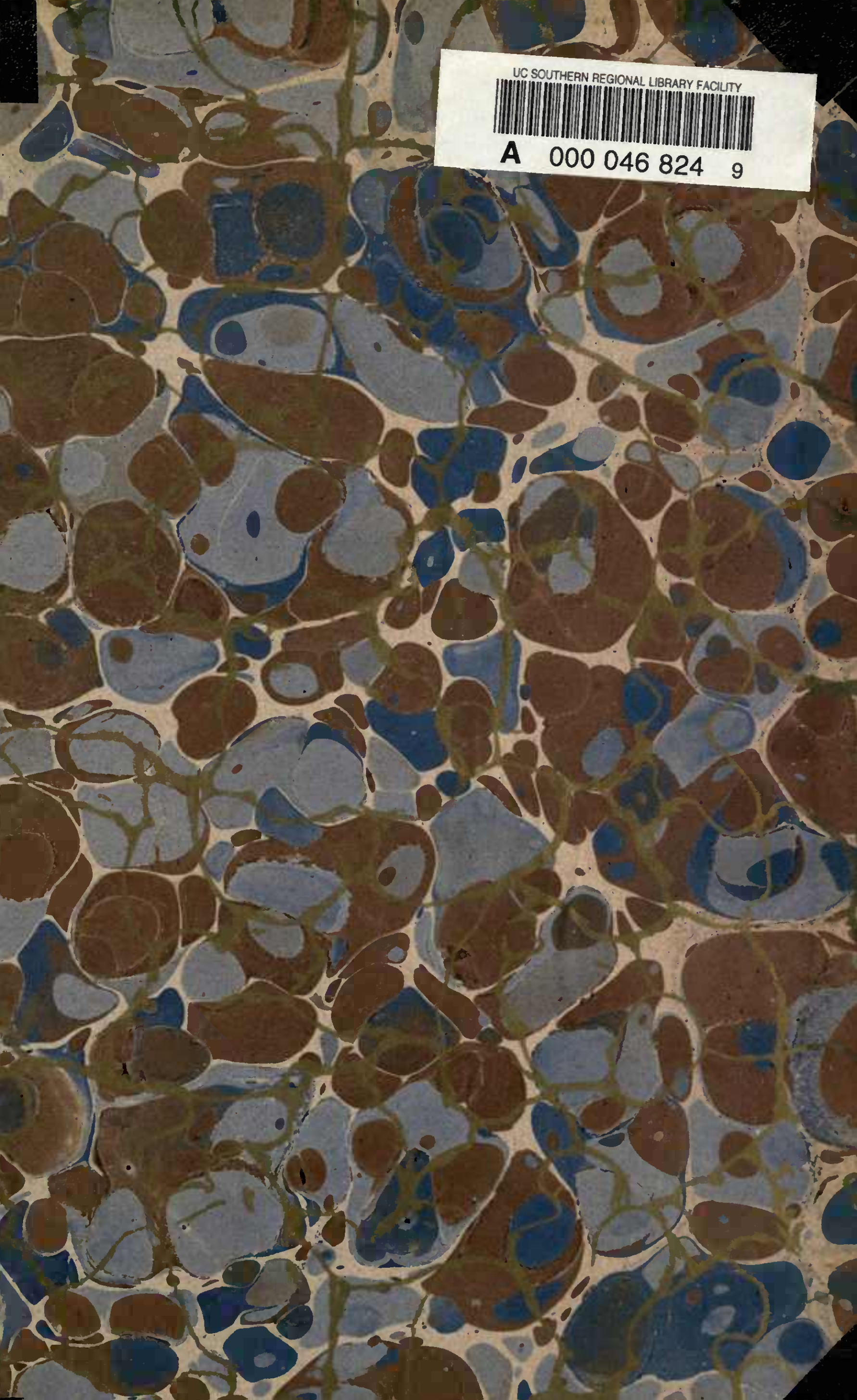

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